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**The pressure for a European dimension within primary education : an analysis of the  
SOCRATES/COMENIUS Action 1 programme in primary schools in England**

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**The Pressure for a European Dimension within  
Primary Education. - An analysis of the  
SOCRATES/COMENIUS Action 1 Programme in  
Primary Schools in England**

**Angela Greenwood**

**A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the  
requirements of the degree of Doctor of Education in the Graduate School of  
Education.**

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## **Abstract**

This study traces the policy to introduce the European Dimension in Education into the primary phase of English schools, from its initial ideas in the Treaty of Rome 1957, through the policy formation at European Union Level to the implementation process at school level. The study draws upon literature on policy-making within a cultural, political and economic context and explores issues of power, control and national identity within collectivist and pluralist political cultures, to frame the research. The link between types of knowledge and relevant knowledge in each of these models is addressed through examination of the curriculum content of the European SOCRATES programme. Conformity of knowledge and common objectives are considered.

The investigation aimed to explore the implications for future European Education programmes in the primary school phase and to identify an approach to projects in the light of current pressures on schools.

The issue of the location of power and control and the assumptions underlying the policy were investigated through analysis of significant policy documents and through interviews with key players in the policy-making process, including members of the British parliament and German Lander parliament, senior officials in the Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) and a member of the British shadow cabinet. Finally the research was triangulated through an illuminative case study of the implementation of the policy at the micro level.

Analysis of the data revealed unintended outcomes of the policy. The case study of implementation illustrated how implementation of the project had not fully fulfilled the, then objectives of the European Union (EU). However it had acted as a school improvement programme and had resulted in raised levels of achievement and esteem within the school. Documentary analysis and analysis of the interviews revealed how the action of policy makers at lower levels and practitioners could distort the original policy intentions at the macro level. It was also clear that the present policy initiatives from National Government and other external pressures on school have increased the likelihood that programmes of this kind will not be embarked upon so readily by school staff.

The study illustrates how specific programmes can impact on school improvement. It also contributes to an understanding of the ways in which European programmes in education need to evolve in order to continue to be part of the school curriculum in the present climate.



## **Dedication and Acknowledgements**

This study is dedicated to my husband John without whose unfailing support and encouragement it would not have been possible. His motivation and willingness to put the needs of my study first have given me the will to complete what seemed at times an impossible task. I cannot adequately express my appreciation.

My immense thanks are expressed for the superb support and guidance shown by Professor Marilyn Osborn. She has encouraged, guided and had great patience, especially when my school workloads have taken over at crucial times! I have been extremely fortunate to have had such an excellent supervisor. - "Thank You Marilyn"!

Thanks also go to all those busy people who readily agreed to take part in being interviewed for the study and to the children and teachers who took up the project so enthusiastically. I have a particular appreciation of the help and friendship shown by our German friends whose commitment to international friendship helped give a real context for the study. I trust that the findings of the study can assist in informing policy decisions, which will lead to improved educational experiences.

Finally I would like to register my appreciation of the late Bill Tyler whose lectures in Social Anthropology in Education fired my desire to learn more and to embark upon research of my own.

## Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the thesis has been submitted for any other degree.

Any views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol.

The thesis has not been presented to any other University for examination in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Signed.....*AM Greenwood*.....

Date.....*24/10/03*.....

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# Chapter 1 - Introduction to the study

## 1.1 The central theme

The relationship between intended policy at the macro-level, the interpreted policy by those along the policy chain and the resultant implemented policy at micro-level (school), is likely to be of considerable importance to both policy makers and school managers. The European Union (EU) has increased its pressure for a policy for a 'European dimension in education' in schools, in particular through the Maastricht Treaty (EC1992) and the resultant framework of the SOCRATES programme (Phillips & Ertl 2003). However despite the increased interest in this area, there is little research into the implementation of intended European education policy and associated programmes at the school level, or of analysis of the policy values underpinning them. Questions pertaining to the impact on the players within the school, the school ethos as a whole and on the raising of standards remain unanswered. In a climate where school practitioners often greet new innovation as just another unwelcome addition to the workload, it would seem that European education projects are perceived by school staffs as having little to offer as argued by Economou (2003) in (Phillips & Ertl 2003).

This study is set within this context of a developing pressure by the EU for schools to introduce a European dimension in education. The study focuses on the policy and on implementation of the COMENIUS strand of the SOCRATES programme, which arose from the Treaty of Maastricht (EC1992). The objectives of the research are:

- To investigate and explore at different levels how and why the European policy to introduce a European dimension into the primary school curriculum has been implemented.
- To contribute to the growing body of knowledge about the European dimension in education.

- To describe and analyse, through the analysis of documents associated with the policy and with interviews with key players, the underlying reasons for the policy and the intended policy outcomes.
- To explore the relationship between the rhetoric of policy at macro level and the practice at micro level including the interpretation of the policy, through a case study of implementation in one primary school.
- To contribute to the research literature on school improvement.
- To use the findings to formulate and identify recommendations for future work in the field within the primary phase of education.

Therefore the study aims to serve as a basis for further work within the local education authorities (LEAs) in the realm of international and citizenship education in primary schools.

The EU declaration that a European dimension in education will bring the European Community closer to its citizens and my own involvement in a COMENIUS Action I project is the catalyst for this piece of research. The projects rely totally on voluntary participation and on project leaders in schools being prepared to take on extra workloads, although there are EU legal requirements that a certain amount of a 'national curriculum' should manifest the European dimension. The SOCRATES programme, is regarded by the EU as crucial to its vision of a new Europe, as indicated in the quotation from the proposal for a decision establishing SOCRATES Phase II.



*“SOCRATES is a cornerstone of the policy to bring the European Community closer to all its citizens..... ....the potential of SOCRATES for encouraging a positive sense of identification with the process of building Europe is manifest.*

*.....it is proposed that Community action be focused on four objectives*

- *to strengthen the European dimension in education at all levels.*
- *to promote co-operation in all sectors and at all levels of education.*
- *to help remove the obstacles to such co-operation.*
- *to encourage educational innovation in the community.*

(European Commission 1998: p7)

The assumptions embedded in these proposals are that:

- the introduction of a European dimension in education can influence future citizens in their attitude to the EU.
- that citizens could or should be closer to the EU

In this chapter I introduce the rationale for the study and outline the issues to be addressed in later chapters. In explaining the focus of the research I draw upon the documents underpinning the implementation of the SOCRATES programme. I seek to explain my own involvement and outline the approaches through which the research questions and objectives are examined. Later in this chapter the definition of “European dimension” is explored and in doing so I use the “Treaty establishing the European Union” (EC 1992) as a point of reference. The five strands identified by the EU in the European dimension in education illustrate the parliament’s view. Finally the chapter outlines the structure of the thesis.

## **1.2 Rationale for the study**

During February 1997 I took part in preliminary visits to establish a COMENIUS partnership with schools in England, France, Germany and Italy. The partnership

project was accepted for funding and officially commenced in September 1997. It was the first for a primary school in my LEA and remained one of only a handful for a significant time. The project was undertaken as part of the SOCRATES Phase I programme.

As the project discussions progressed, I gained an awareness of the issues surrounding SOCRATES and I began to see how educationalists appeared to have a relatively free rein in designing projects in Phase I. However, officially the parameters within which the projects were to be designed were quite specific. The complexity and continual frustration with which paperwork was handled, was and still is an issue which impacts on schools' decisions to follow a partnership programme. Theoretically this has been addressed in the Phase II proposals. The Phase II programme was delayed in its implementation and although some action has been taken to rectify the problems associated with Phase I, in reality the bureaucracy still exists for schools wishing to participate.

The SOCRATES /COMENIUS programme, emphasises the need for children to carry out joint projects, which focus on cultural identity and heritage whilst also developing a European identity. This leaves us with many other problems as we try to identify cultural heritage in a world, which has historically seen constant change and the re-drawing of national boundaries. In Chapters 2 & 3 these issues of national identity will be explored further.

The policy leading to the SOCRATES programme was formed within the context of the European Community. It was also influenced by historical issues, not least the Second World War and by developing economic issues. The EU had a common central

objective to economically bind the countries of France and Germany so that warfare between them was an unlikely event. Other objectives as quoted in the previous section, arising out of the assumptions of the key players contributed to the formation of the SOCRATES programme, as my research will make clear.

Policy development is a response to change but it can also bring about other change.

Taylor et al (1997) argue:

*“educational policies do not emerge in a vacuum but reflect compromises between competing interests”*  
(Taylor et al 1997. p7)

It is also true to say that as well as the intended policy outcomes there are those which are unintended and unexpected. This study presents an example of this in Chapter 7. To understand how these issues translate both into policy rhetoric and practice, the assumptions underlying the EU policy need to be examined. Were the assumptions different for different key players in the policy process? What did they hope to achieve? How was the policy interpreted by others?

The draft proposals of the interim report of the SOCRATES project served as a basis for my initial document analysis. Eurydice, the information network on Education in Europe has collated documentation on the European Dimension in Education since 1990. Numerous development reports have been published including those on key data within the EC, reports of European awareness development projects and resolutions of the Council of Ministers. However very little research is published independently of the EU, which relates to primary education and the European dimension. The growing interest in the EU and education has produced a predominance of articles largely

concerned with other areas of education. Other papers in journals do not always have a research base but address the issues from a theoretical perspective.

Of those addressing some of the issues relevant to this piece of research Sultana (1995), Coulby (1997), Byant (1991) and Ryba (1992) and Ryba (1996) discuss the EU's agenda for education. Coulby and Jones (1996) and Coulby (1994a) highlight the concepts relating to a European dimension and national identity and the way identity is shaped by knowledge. Continuing this theme, Coulby (1994b) and (1997) argues that economic forces of the EU have influenced culture and knowledge and have undermined their regional content. Ryba (1996) argues that the powers of the EU in the field of education are severely limited by the principle of subsidiarity and do not pose the threat argued by Sultana (1996).

Ball (1994) adds his perception of how education within the market has shifted the locus of control away from teachers and placed it firmly within a framework of performance in particular knowledge. The focus of this discussion leads to Swandt's (1994) view that knowledge and truth are constructs of the system or the players within it. The issue of how globalisation has impacted on curriculum initiatives such as the national curriculum and as a result, projects such as COMENIUS, is addressed by Priestly (2002). Naval et al (2002) examine the increased pressure and priority for democratic citizenship programmes, especially in Europe since the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. This is followed by Osler & Starkey (2002) who argue that citizenship is a

*"highly charged political issue"* (ibid: p143)

They explore the tensions inherent in citizenship programmes and relate this to anti-racist policies.

David Phillips forthcoming book (Phillips and Ertl 2003), discusses the research carried out in the field of the European dimension in education. This focuses on differences in interpretation and implementation of EU education policies and their effect on national education systems, and is highly relevant to this study. In addition the SOCRATES and LEONARDO programmes are examined. Brine (1999) examines the EU's agenda in education and training, especially with regard to gender.

These arguments together with the evidence from this study would suggest that implementation of the intended policy is varied and uneven. It is also contingent upon the players along the implementation chain, both at national and local level. Intended policy at the macro-level may be mediated to produce a very different implemented policy at the micro (school) level.

### **1.3 Research questions**

The arguments outlined in the last section together with my review of the theoretical issues as identified in the literature (Chapter 3) and my experiences of work within the European dimension in education have contributed to the formation of the research questions. This study seeks to critically examine the way in which EU education policy has been used and will be used to form European identity in future citizens of Europe. Theories of power and control of policy (section 1.4) and pressures towards Europeanism in the light of distinctive national identities are illustrated by reference to a case study of the implementation of a COMENIUS Action 1 project in a Key Stage 2 school. These ideas and theories are explored in relation to the implementation of the policy at two levels:

- a) Macro Level - European and national policy
- b) Micro Level - School project implementation.

Issues of power and control within policy-making and the tension between Europeanisation and distinctive national identities, underpin the study and impinge on policy and practice at all levels, both macro and micro. These issues inform the research questions to be explored further in later chapters. The empirical questions are:

- 1) How does the SOCRATES/COMENIUS Action1 programme propose to bring the EU closer to its citizens?
- 2) What is the view of worthwhile knowledge contained in the programme and how is this presented?
- 3) What are the assumptions underlying the policy?
- 4) What were the outcomes of the policy implementation in one school?

#### **1.4 Theoretical approaches used in the study**

This study is located within a qualitative paradigm and uses a constructivist and interpretivist approach. An understanding of issues of power and control is central to the critical analysis of discourses contained within the documents examined. In this study power and control are identified, as concepts which allow those holding them to initiate desired aims. It is also pertinent to recognise that power often shifts from one party to another and is contingent upon many contexts and factors. At the theoretical level, literature on the location of power and control within policy-making, national identity and policymaking within political, cultural and economic contexts inform the research questions and relate to the key arguments of the thesis:

- 1. There is a struggle for power and control of education policy and the curriculum and a tension between the pressure to develop a common European identity as against a national identity.

2. Education curricula are subject to and determined by the current dominant set of values and beliefs and to global economic pressures.
3. Intended European educational policy will be interpreted and mediated by teachers and headteachers in line with their own professional perspectives and values and needs (PACE study Osborn et al (2000)), and will lead to unintended outcomes.

The problems connected with these arguments will be addressed later in Chapter 3 where I shall look at the theoretical issues arising from policy-making within a cultural, economic and political context.

### **1.5 Definitions of “European Dimension”**

The definition of the term “European dimension in education” and its concept seem to be a universal problem linked to the difficulty in defining Europe. The concept of a European dimension in education has been historically connected to European integration. The role of the European dimension in the promotion of a European identity in young people, in preparation for participation in the development of the Community was an aim identified in the Maastricht Treaty (EC 1992) and the subsequent Green Paper. (Ertl 2003).

In promoting the concept the European Commission seem unable to precisely define the term. Article 126(2) of the Maastricht Treaty states

*“Community action shall be aimed at developing the European Dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the member states”*

Article 126(2) of the Treaty establishing the European Union  
1992  
(EC 1992)

The discussion of languages continues throughout many of the Commission and Parliament press releases, memos and discussions of SOCRATES. The draft memorandum on Youth and Europe (EC 1999a) emphasises this. Here the idea of languages is again reinforced and another strand, the deepening of a European consciousness is introduced. This idea follows on from those proposed in the establishment of the second phase of SOCRATES, which emphasises co-operation, the removal of obstacles and the encouragement of educational innovation.

In the original text of “The Resolution on the European dimension in education by the Council and Ministers of Education, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1988” (EC 1988) and amended by the Green Paper (EC 1993), the objectives were defined as follows:

- *Strengthen in young people a sense of European Identity and make clear to them the value of European Civilisation and the foundations on which the European peoples intend to base their development....*
  - *Prepare young people to take part in the economic and social development of the Community and in making concrete progress towards European Union, as stipulated in the single European Act*
  - *Make them aware of the advantages, which the community represents....*
  - *Improve their knowledge of the Community and its member states..... and bring home to them the significance of the co-operation of Member States of the European Community with other countries of Europe and the world.*
- (EC 1993: p17-18)

The problem of definition continues through national differences in the interpretation of the concept of a European dimension. These are reinforced by the differences highlighted by Ryba (1992) (cited in Ertl (2003)) that were apparent between policy-makers and practitioners. He concluded this was due to the emphasis on “*project-type activities*” (ibid), a view which will be explored in the analysis of the research in Chapter 8.3. Economou (2003) supports the idea of national differences in interpretation with her discussion of “The European Dimension in Education Statement” (DFE1991). This emphasised that the UK government had different priorities in implementing the



EC Resolution of 1988 and as a result the European dimension in education looked very different to that of other member countries.

The EU and its bodies identified five strands to the European dimension in education: -

1. Knowledge of member states
2. Knowledge of European languages
3. A sense of European identity
4. Future participation in the development of the EU
5. A commitment to membership of the EU

The handbook for “Managing the European Dimension” (DFEE 1997) further reinforces these strands in its first chapter. Although the programme has twelve aims, these five strands run throughout. For the purpose of this study the definition of the European Dimension will encompass these five strands.

## **1.6 Structure of the study**

In investigating the research questions I first examine the context in which the policy is set. Policies do not arise from a vacuum and so it is important to explore the European background within which the policy has developed. Issues of war and economics linking countries politically and economically have impacted greatly on the policy context. These will be discussed in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 3, I revisit the research questions and the theoretical approaches underpinning them. Theories of the location of power and control within policy-

making, national identity and the effect of schools' pedagogical approaches will form a basis for discussion about education and curriculum content within a political, economic and cultural context.

Chapter 4 discusses the methodological approaches most suited to a small-scale study of this kind and sets out the design of the study, methods of data collection and analysis. This is followed by a discussion of the issues involved with interviewing powerful people and of the difficulties manifest in analysing case study data. I also examine the literature relating to case study methods and to documentary analysis of documents and consider the strengths and limitations of the design.

Chapters 5 and 6 present the findings from the analysis of interviews with key players in the policy process and from the documents associated with the policy. In these chapters, the assumptions underlying the policy are analysed within a theoretical framework of power and control and national identity which also considers in Chapter 3 the difficulty of defining "Europe" as a concept.

Chapter 7 illuminates the issues discussed in the previous chapters by focusing on a case study of the implementation of the policy at the micro (school) level. The study concludes with a revisiting of the original research questions in the light of the evidence presented and considers the implications of the findings for future work in the field.

## **1.7 Summary of this chapter**

In this chapter I have set out the way in which the thesis is developed. I have outlined the focus and the rationale. The research questions have been located within an examination of the SOCRATES / COMENIUS Action1 programme and the methodology to explore this has been established. The collectivist and pluralist theoretical models, which are to be more fully developed in Chapter 3, and the theoretical approaches of constructivism and interpretivism to be expanded in Chapter 4, have been introduced. Power and control and national identity have been identified as key concepts in the study.

In the next chapter, the study is set within the historical context of Europeanisation and the establishment of nation states. The present programmes are related to the political, economic and cultural contexts of the past. The chapter considers how current policy on European education programmes to introduce the European dimension in education are linked to historical events and issues.

## **Chapter 2 - Setting the study within the historical context**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter outlined the focus for this study of a developing pressure for a European dimension in education. This supranational policy has its roots in Article 126 of the Treaty of Maastricht, establishing the European Union 1992 (EC 1992) and less overtly in the earlier Treaties of Paris (EC 1951) & Rome (EC 1957).

Policy is never set in a vacuum; it is a response to or a catalyst for, change within the structures of society. In this chapter I relate the key concepts to the historical, and present contexts of the policy for a European dimension in education and explore how the developing process to realise the ideals of the Treaty of Maastricht and its predecessors, have come about. I explore the history of the formation of the EU as part of the wider global scene. In order to understand how SOCRATES one of the EU's main programmes for education came about, a brief overview of some of the various political, economic and cultural issues impacting on the development of Europe is needed. A chronology of key events and policies is used to highlight the process (Figure 1). All this is intended to provide a background to the empirical research project described and analysed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. In Chapter 3 the issues discussed here will be developed within a discussion of the political, cultural and economic context of modern policy-making and the theoretical concepts underpinning the study.

### **2.2 Early historical background**

The borders within and without "Europe" have, and continue to, shift as states become nations and nations revert to states. The areas covered by the modern countries of

Germany and France have been in significant conflict since the sixteenth century. Much of this conflict involved political and economic factors although not always overtly. A more detailed explanation of the early history is available in Appendix ii.

From the seventeenth century onwards nationalism and national identity became a significant factor in Europe. The issues of nationalism and national identity are still a feature of the actions of the EU today. It is against this background of dispute and conflict between and within nations and states that the EU has come into being and from whence the SOCRATES programme has emerged. Its development will be traced in section 2.5 and the issues developed in the literature review in Chapter 3. The next section explores the issues of nationalism and national identity in terms of the historical context of the EU.

### **2.3 The Influence of historical thinkers on political and cultural policy in Europe**

The SOCRATES programme seeks to create citizens of 'Europe' through education policy, which emphasises collaborative working, knowledge of other member states and citizenship of Europe. Education has historically been at the forefront of the creation of nationality. It played a central role in Renaissance thinking in Europe. It gave rise to ideas of a sovereign state and to the birth of modern nationality. The concept of the nation-state has been viewed historically, quite differently in different nations and states. For example the French view has been of a state centred homogenous organisation with emphasis on citizenship of the state, with culture and linguistic strands emanating from the state. This is reflected in the very prescribed school curriculum. This contrasts with the Germanic perspective of a folk centred, heterogeneous organisation. (Wibourg 2000 p235) This can still be seen in modern Germany in the small villages and towns that

form the lander with their mixture of housing and light industry within each population centre. The lander have their own governmental systems and are responsible for their own education systems, but ultimately answer to Berlin. Communities are still very much based around the village or town. The German idea of nation was centred on a cultural and linguistic idea, which was expressed in the formation of the state.

It is important to consider the impact of two influential thinkers from the French and the German tradition, Rousseau, 1712 - 1778 and Herder 1744 – 1803, in the area of nationality, education and the nation state. National identity and nation state, “*political nationalism*” of Rousseau (Barnard, 1998 p23) and Herder’s “*cultural nationalism*” as espoused by the German system of cultural and spiritual aspects of nation, (Barnard 1998 p125) are linked by their definitions of the purpose of education in a national system. Rousseau’s perspective was that governments were shaped by the people and the task of government was to provide the structure for the shaping of the nation. In this way patriotism “*could be created and moulded*” (Wibourg 2000 p236), through educational institutions. There are similarities with the philosophy of the present SOCRATES programme in which one of the stated aims is to bring “.... *the European Community closer to all its citizens*”. (EC 1998a: p7).

Herder argued that language was central to nationalism and reached further than just communication. In contrast to Rousseau he saw a nation as a separate common culture embedded in a common language with a separate identity, rather than an entity created by the “*general will*” (Rousseau 1762). It was this, which produced the political identity and the idea of the nation as a sharing of a common tradition, grounded in a common language. Herder believed that loss of a common language meant loss of identity. In

contrast Rousseau's citizens were united in a contract of political convenience, where the interests of the individual and a desire for a common objective were served by the whole.

So we have two contrasting ideas, on the one hand Rousseau with the "*general will*" (Rousseau 1762) keeping groups together under political leaders, thereby creating a nation and on the other hand Herder with the nation based on historical context and a common language. Thus Herder's concept of education was a means whereby the cultural heritage could be passed through generations. There are parallels between the two sets of ideas in that a common language and culture is the outcome of the nation. Rousseau expels all aliens and Herder's nation has a common language and culture at its roots. In these ideas there are important comparatives with the issues facing united Europe in the consideration of minority languages and cultures.

The creation of the EU challenges the concept of the nation state and poses questions concerning its future. Although there is no EU wide common curriculum, the implementation of the various EU sponsored programmes go some way towards elements of this.

The nation states of Germany and France are founding and major players in the EU and the basis on which their states are founded has major implications for the EU's organisation and programmes, particularly in the field of education for a future Europe. Supranational policy, which has to be transmitted nationally and then institutionally, and in the context of subsidiarity, is highly complex. In practical terms a small demonstration of the friction between competing education systems was demonstrated

in the case study in Chapter 7. National systems, which serve different political agenda, were the basis of heated argument between partners when drawing up a project plan. Indeed the EU of the present fifteen countries is due to expand, including many newly created states such as Slovakia and the Czech Republic. This constantly shifting European identity potentially creates discord. This has been reflected in such decisions as the single currency and the decision on expansion. Phillips and Ertl (2003) conclude that EU programme initiatives can be “*interpreted and implemented in widely divergent manners by the various Member states.*” (ibid: p305). How will this impact on a policy to co-operate within education systems at both macro and micro level?

## **2.4 Post World War II**

I have already referred to the historical issues of nationality and resulting wars. It was at the end of World War II that saw the solid basis for the EU, which grew out of the organisation arising after the cessation of conflict.

The organisation set up to bind France and Germany economically, with the object of preventing further conflict was The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The concept being that nations linked and dependent economically would be unable to war with each other. This idea was suggested by the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, who had served in the German army in 1914-18 whilst living in Lorraine. He had been inspired by the ideas of Jean Monnet whose vision was of a “United States of Europe”. After this war Schuman became a French citizen when Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France. His awareness of the issues, borne out of his own experiences were an important factor in the negotiations which were readily taken up by the German



Federal Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer. Invitations to other Western European countries to join the ECSC were made, and Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands agreed to join. Britain declined the invitation. (Thody 1997). The reasons for this were not only economic but also Britain's historic political antipathy towards Europe. By 1958, The Treaty of Rome 1957 establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and Euratom had come into force. An additional reason now inspired the creation of the EEC; this was to ensure that Europe became prosperous enough to not need the support of the USA. (Thody 1997) The signatories were the original six members of the ECSC.

Initially the EEC was economically based although its roots were firmly political. In 1954 Britain set up a working party to form a free trade association to rival the proposed EEC. In this decision Britain sought to retain sovereignty, an important issue in terms of national identity versus European identity. The European Free Trade Area (EFTA) was eventually set up in 1960 and proposed trading with Commonwealth countries. Trading did not come about to any great degree as this period saw the economic rise of the Pacific Rim countries with whom the Commonwealth countries found more benefit in trading, as well as with the USA. Britain's first application to join the EEC came in 1961. (Thody 1997)

The initial goal of preventing war between France and Germany is now a secondary consideration. Economic goals have taken priority. Creation of wealth, and efficiency and competition within a global market are paramount. Education curricula are geared to this end. The curriculum of England is intended to increase competitiveness with other nations. So how does SOCRATES and EU education policy fit into this scenario? If it

does not align with national curricula will it fail as an initiative? In Chapters 5, 6 & 7 these issues are explored in the presentation and analysis of the data.

## **2.5 The origin of the SOCRATES programme**

Although education was not specifically mentioned, the SOCRATES programme has its roots in the Treaty of Rome 1957 (EC 1957). It was the Maastricht Treaty 1992 (TEU) that gave education a prominent place. However the first meeting of the EC Ministers of Education in 1974 gave rise to the resolution on co-operation in the field of education. A range of action programmes in the field of education and training followed but none that dealt with school education as a whole. Then came the *Council Resolution on the European Dimension in Education* (EC 1988) in 1988. This focused on strengthening the European dimension in education and on increasing a European identity in young people. However there was no real action in school education until the Maastricht Treaty and the subsequent Green Paper on the European dimension in education (EC 1993), gave rise to the SOCRATES Action programmes.

TEU discussed encouragement of the European dimension in education and incentive measures to achieve the policy objectives. These were realised in the decision of the EU (EC 1995a) establishing the first phase of the SOCRATES programme in the field of education. Sections relating to the various stages of education were constructed within the programme. That dealing with the primary phase was named after the philosopher Comenius. The groundwork for this initiative was set by the Green Paper *To Establish the European Dimension of Education in Schools* (EC 1993). There followed a significant number of documents all relating to the development of the programme (A list of those



used in this research can be found in Appendix i). Phase I of the SOCRATES programme initiated in 1995 was followed after five years by a review and Phase II in 2000.

## **2.6 Global factors, identity and the European Dimension in education**

A need for socio-economic restructuring was a result of the globalisation process caused in part by the rise of competition from Japan and the oil crisis of the 1970's. This went in tandem with a decline in western manufacturing industries, as cheaper goods from other areas of the world became widely available. The impact of the growth of information technology, together with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 created a new context for politics and economics in Europe. This set new criteria for 'valuable knowledge' (developed in Chapter 3). There is now an emphasis in the UK education system on knowledge for economic competition in a global economy, as demonstrated by the national curriculum and the introduction of school league tables. The knowledge relating to state or nation as in the perspectives of Herder and Rousseau is now at odds with the knowledge required to build and maintain a EU, not least in the aspect of a common language.

The stated aim of the SOCRATES programme, to bring the EU closer to its citizens requires a different knowledge base than that which maintains nationalism within one nation or state. Whose agenda is being pursued in the assumptions underlying this programme and policy? And is there a conflict between national curricula and the programme? These questions will be addressed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

To understand the impact of education on EU policy we must look to the Treaty of Maastricht 1992, (EC 1992) Articles 126 and 127. This is the first time that education has been specifically mentioned and it takes centre stage in the rhetoric. Whilst sovereignty and the state education systems are protected there is an expectation that member states will honour the spirit of co-operation by following the guidelines of the Commission's statements on education, which includes a European dimension. There may well be a discrepancy between the rhetoric and the practice in member states. In Chapter 5 this issue will be pursued in the analysis with key players in the policy at national and local level in the UK.

Figure 1

**A Chronology of key events and policies related to the implementation of a policy for a European Dimension in Primary Education**

1712 – 1778	Rousseau	Influential thinker of French tradition ( <i>political nationalism</i> )
1744 – 1803	Herder	Influential thinker of German tradition ( <i>Cultural nationalism</i> )
1914 - 18	World War I	Schuman serves in the German army whilst living in Lorraine. Later inspired by ideas of Jean Monnet
1939 – 1945	World War II	
1951	Treaty of Paris	Establishes the European Coal & Steel Community (ECSC) 1952
1957	Treaty of Rome	Establishes the European Economic Community (EEC) & the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) 1958
1960	EFTA set up	
1967	The merger Treaty	Establishing the European Communities (EC) A single Council, & Commission established
1971	First meeting of council of education ministers	
1973	Janne report	For a community policy on education – EC bulletin, supplement 10/73
1974	Resolution of the ministers of Education	On cooperation in the field of education official journal of EC, C98/2. 2o August 1974
1976	Resolution of council of ministers	Comprising an Actionprogramme in the field of education EC bulletin 2-1976:2252
1988	Resolution of council of ministers	On the European Dimension in Education official journal of EC, C177/5-7 6 July 1988
1989	The Berlin Wall falls	A new context for politics & economics in Europe
1992	Maastricht Treaty	Treaty establishing European Union (EU) 1993 New article 126 on education in particular in developing the European dimension
1993	Green Paper on the European Dimension in education	Based on the Council Resolution 1988 COM(93)457
1995	Creation of Directorate General 22 (DG XXII)	DG XXII to take charge of Education & Culture
1995	White Paper –Teaching & Learning - Towards the Learning Society	COM(95)590
1995	Decision of the European Parliament & council	Establishing the Community Action programme Socrates I
1997	Towards a Europe of knowledge	Communication from the Commission EU bulletin, 11-1997: 1.3.106
1999	The Agenda 2000	to redefine the framework & priorities of the European Social Fund for 2000- 2006
2000	Action programme SOCRATES II	Action programme Phase II for period 2000 – 2006 EU bulletin 1 / 2 2000: 1.4.17

(adapted from Siedersleben & Dahl 2003: 317-326)

## **2.7 Conclusion and summary**

In this chapter I have traced the historical background of the formation of the SOCRATES programme. In doing so, I have discussed the issues of historical conflict among the nations and states of Europe and in particular the disputes between France and Germany. The historical background to the formation of the EU has been briefly described and the consequential effects of this on nationality issues. The influence of the historical thinkers, Rousseau and Herder on the view of nation and nationality and the link to education has been discussed in the light of the present EU objectives, to bring Europe closer to its citizens through SOCRATES. The challenge of the creation of the programme to individual member countries' national curricula was briefly discussed and is developed in the analysis of the empirical data in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

The impact of the global market and economic competition are influential factors in decisions about curricula and their knowledge content. This has been briefly argued and will be developed further in the next chapter. Finally the issue of whose agenda is being pursued by the EU and what assumptions underlie the programme both historically and in the present, were highlighted.

In the next chapter I discuss the theoretical issues arising from policy-making in a political, economic and cultural context, using the historical background of Europe to inform understanding of the present day policy.

## **Chapter 3 - Reviewing the literature: Theoretical issues arising in policy-making within a political, economic and cultural context**

### **3.1 Theoretical attempts to explain issues arising in policy-making within a political, economic and cultural context.**

This chapter sets out to investigate the theoretical literature pertaining to policy-making and implementation with particular reference to education policy and the literature regarding Europeanisation and the European dimension in education. The key themes of the thesis, which frame these discussions and are elucidated through reference to the theoretical literature are that:

- there is a struggle for power and control of the curriculum, which leads to a struggle to develop a common European identity as against a national identity.
- education curricula are subject to and determined by the current dominant set of values and beliefs and to global economic pressures.
- intended European educational policy will be interpreted and mediated by teachers and headteachers in line with their own professional perspectives, values and needs (PACE study Osborn et al (2000)), and will lead to unintended outcomes.

The issue of policy-making within the political, cultural and economic context of the EU and geographic Europe is central to the research questions as posed in Chapter 1.3. The nature of policy and the context within which particular policy is made is examined, and the school situation is linked to the national and international context. A consideration of how national identity and education within the market impinges on the curriculum taught in schools and the consequential links to the European dimension is explored. A summary of the key points concludes the chapter.

### 3.2 The nature of policy

Policies are never produced in a vacuum but are responses to the political, economic and social context. The development of policy must therefore be viewed in the context of other current policies. Whatever the reason underlying the initiation of a policy, the outcome is a shift in power relations between those who make and those subject to the policy. This power is not fixed. Its locus shifts as the implementation proceeds or fails. The ‘intended policy’ at the macro-level (as in EU policy) can be mediated by players within the system. This produces ‘interpreted policy’ and together with contextual factors such as funding, results in ‘implemented policy’ which differs from the ‘intended policy’. As Lawton (1992) suggests educational problems and issues are viewed not in a random way but linked to

*“deep rooted, sub-cultural, and political beliefs, attitudes and values”*  
(Lawton 1992: p11)

These idea and belief systems contribute to a view on the purposes of education. A recent development in the field of European studies is the concept of ‘European education space’. Mouzelis (1998) explains that *“systems...are brought into closer temporal and spatial proximity and this generates unprecedented levels of cultural and social complexity”* (ibid: p13) and in a discussion of EU educational policies, Novoa & de Jong-Lambert (2003) suggests that *“the space of politics has been reoriented towards greater visibility in the public eye”* (ibid: p63). He continues by suggesting that there is *“a tendency to consider the ‘European educational space’ as a field of expertise, in which the main objective is to achieve consensus”* (ibid: p63).

The idea that the purpose of education can shift is central in the rhetoric of politicians, international, national and local. Within the European educational space, the EU has defined a purpose for education with a European dimension and in this study the



relevant documents will be analysed (Chapter 5) in relation to this view, although the intended purpose along with the policy may be very different when implemented.

### **3.3 The effect of political cultures on the content of education**

To understand the complex interactions and power relations taking place, it is helpful to examine the effect of political culture on the content of the curriculum. I will consider two models of political culture the collectivist and the pluralist models. As McClean (1995) explains, in the collectivist political culture the state is the central force, dictating the form of education as defined by state need. It is the state, which is responsible for economic and social change. Teachers are state officials administering state prescribed curriculum. In its purest form ideological conformity is sought through political education. Contrasting with this is the pluralist culture in which boundaries are very loose and broad in which decisions are made at a local or school level.

In England today we appear to have a mismatch of political cultures. Whilst on one hand 'local management of schools' purports to be of the pluralist culture, the constraints brought about by the national curriculum and subsequent linked reforms are of a collectivist category. In addition the programmes of study in the national curriculum characterise the need to ensure control by the national government.

### **3.4 Issues of Knowledge**

From the perspective of the collectivist culture knowledge will be linked to state needs and these may be shifting. The problem faced by European policy is that the countries of the EU do not share the same political culture and so issues of relevant knowledge and thus curriculum content are contentious. Indeed some countries in which a pluralist culture predominates will not share the notion of relevant or worthwhile

knowledge. Whilst the EU is not seeking to impose a Europe wide curriculum, it is seeking to bring about some conformity of knowledge and ethos. Within the economic context governments may require knowledge to change to accommodate a particular economic belief or action. The question of who decides whether particular knowledge is worthwhile is dependent on the prevailing culture.

Within the EU particular knowledge of partner countries and of historic events may serve to encourage an internal market and absence of other knowledge, designed to bring about particular feelings of unity. An examination of the content of the SOCRATES/COMENIUS Action 1 programme requirements quickly highlights the knowledge deemed useful or essential to the 'state', in this case the EU. However there may well be conflict with that which is required at a national or local level and it is the outcome of this conflict, which may well determine the extent of implementation of policy as shown in the case study in Chapter 7, as there is a struggle between national identity and EU identity.

### **3.5.1 Power relationships & control of curriculum**

The current views of the purpose of education and knowledge may be many and variable from one culture to another however the EU has imposed a view of knowledge onto member states curricula, by way of its various legally binding documents.

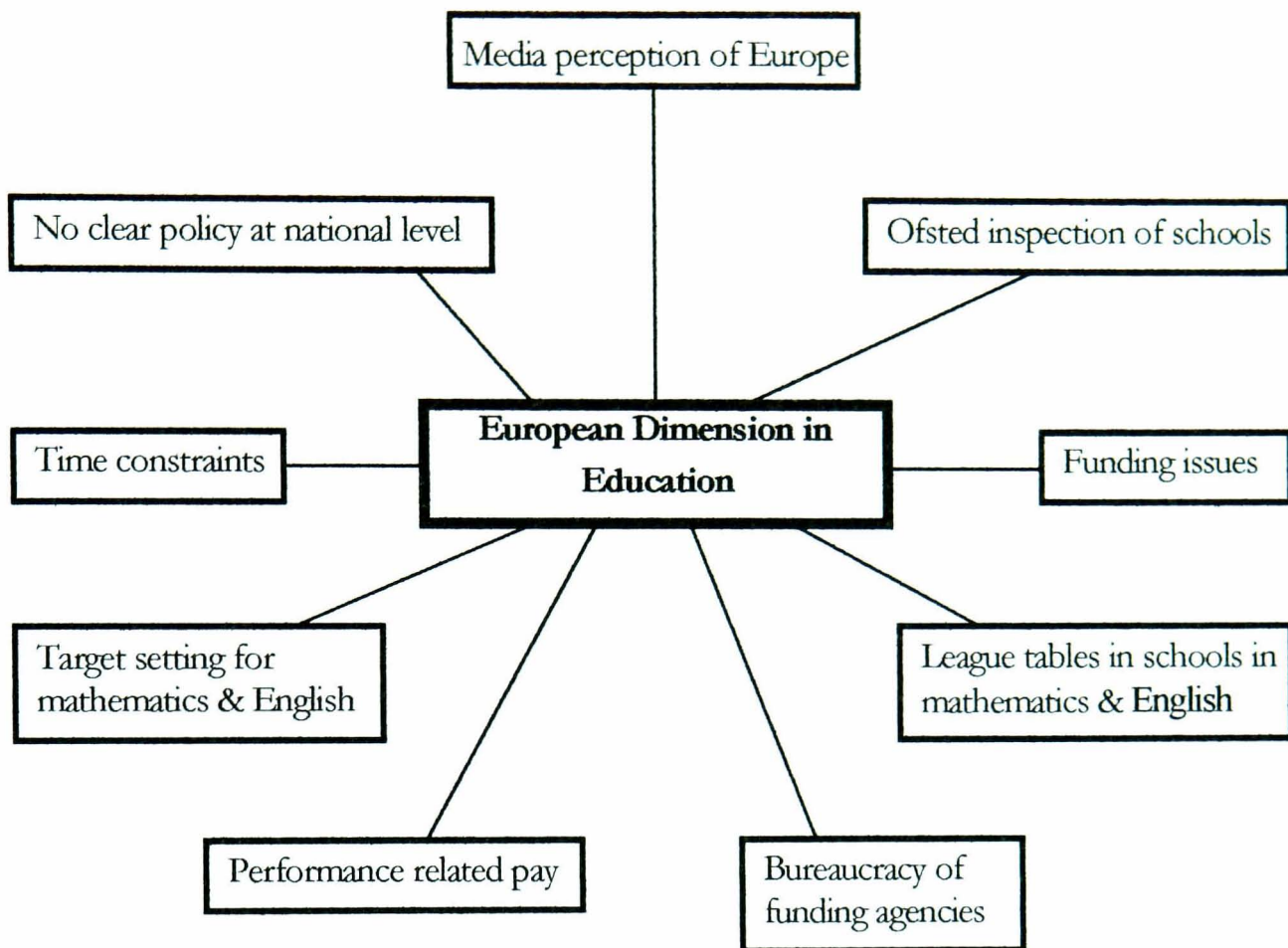
In schools in England today, control of curriculum and pedagogy is determined by the implementation of numerous initiatives from central government, for example the implementation of the national curriculum, the national literacy and numeracy strategies, Ofsted inspection and performance management to name a few. Within these policies interested parties struggle to influence the definition and purpose. Kogan (1975) views

policy as a discourse linked to knowledge. If this is so, then the discourse has already been constructed at the macro level of national government. The key concepts have been established and the purpose and knowledge base already defined.

The many new initiatives in primary education today are attempting to reconstruct and redefine the purpose of teaching. Various forms of control are being used to this end – the control of the curriculum (with which this research is mainly concerned), the market and management. They form a matrix of power relations Ball (1994: p48). The way in which intended policy is interpreted and mediated to become implemented policy is presented in Chapters 5, 6 & 7.

Within the context of all these initiatives the EU has declared its policy to bring Europe closer to its citizens:

- To what extent does this fit within the current policies and the discourses they promote?
- What is the status of this policy, how does it interact with other policies and where is the locus of power situated?
- Schools have many other competing pressures on them (Figure 2). Do these pressures militate for or against this particular policy?



**Figure 2 Pressures working against the implementation of the European dimension in primary education**

The answer to these questions lies in examining the purpose of the policy and the underlying ideas and beliefs. There appear to be three major agencies of control, which are relevant here, central government, the EU and local government all with their particular sets of discourses. The extent of the relative control exercised by each will have far reaching implications for the policy implementation. The context of so many different players interacting will provide ample opportunity for manoeuvre within the policy. (Wallace 1990)

### **3.5.2 Curriculum Content and the European Dimension**

As Ball (1994) has noted the teacher is increasingly absent in the field of policy-making within education. Teachers' roles have shifted so that they are increasingly forced into the position of an agent of the state in terms of delivery of the state curriculum, which

includes testing. Pedagogical decision-making is no longer the preserve of teachers, resulting in a loss of professionalism (ibid 1994). The curriculum is controlled at least in part through a system of testing and inspection. The research data points to this aspect being important in the decision of schools to pursue additional curriculum projects such as SOCRATES. Whilst there is pressure to produce ever higher test results in a restricted range of subjects, and whilst pay is linked to results, test subjects will be the curriculum areas on which schools will focus. Additional pressures imposed in other ways, through new and flawed government dictated information management systems and increased administration and paperwork due to an increased level of accountability, all ensure that any additional projects which are not statutory have little chance of being adopted. This is particularly so if the project entails more bureaucracy.

Policy and thus control over the curriculum needs to be understood with reference to the influence of major players within the field. In this context they are many and varied; the EU would appear to be the major player together with national government. Local government has a role to play, as do schools who must react to and interpret the policies of national government. There is an assumption that policy makers control the context within which the policy is written, so that there is direct control over implementation and it proceeds as intended (Elmore 1989). But policy does not just consist of texts it is also "*living actions*" (ibid:) and practices.

Outside influences exert power over policy and thus the outcome of implementation may not be as intended. Control of the curriculum is not straightforward and certainly not contingent upon the policy makers' intentions in isolation.

The effect of the influence of national education policies upon 'intended European education policy' is in this case at its most active within the school. Morrell (1996) argues that there is a deficit in volition by member states in implementing the European dimension, furthermore "*the European dimension has been virtually excluded from the National Curriculum Orders in England*" (ibid: p 1f). Economou (2003) in (Phillips & Ertl 2003) reasons that within the UK the European dimension is treated differently in each of the constituent countries. In England there is no direct government involvement, with LEAs left to act as they think fit. However the revised national curriculum 2000 does contain broad aims which allude to children's knowledge of the international and global dimension of their lives. Phillips (2003) in discussing Articles 126 & 127 of TEU (EC1992), concludes that the contents result in an "*unevenness*" of implementation of policy within the EU because of the principle of subsidiarity and Savvides (2003) in (Phillips & Ertl 2003) concludes that it would be possible for teachers to ignore the European element at Key Stage 2. Economou deduces that the government has not delivered in its duties in terms of framework for the European dimension and national curriculum content. The funding agency has inadequate communication to schools, caused by a lack of teacher representatives on its advisory committee (Economou (2003) in Phillips & Ertl (2003) p125). These issues are reflected in the research findings of this project from both the case study and interview data (Chapters 6 & 7).

In discussing control of the curriculum in European countries, both Weiner (1996) and Kliebard (1996) refer to government curriculum policy as reflecting public opinion in a much larger domain than just curriculum matters.

This is reflected in the 'popular press' and their attitude to all things European. Government policy and curriculum action in the European dimension reveal a

mismatch, which may reflect the views and beliefs of a xenophobic culture often fuelled by the media. Of course this discourse will bring with it a set of values and beliefs and a perceived view of worthwhile knowledge, which does not sit comfortably with the EU view.

### **3.6 Globalisation, Warfare and National Identity**

There is a need to understand the impact that the issues discussed in the previous sections have, within the policymaking and implementation context. The struggle for control of the curriculum or part of it is a result of attempts by the EU to counter the xenophobic and racist actions of both the past and the present. The Treaty of Rome 1957 was an attempt to bind economically the countries that had been at war, in an attempt to ensure peace (Thody 1997), (Fontaine 1998), (Urwin 1995), (McGiffen 2001). Further actions by the EU have appeared to consolidate those bonds in other ways. The introduction of the SOCRATES programme is just one of those actions. It would suggest that the underlying reason for its introduction was to strengthen this coalition but in attempting to create a unified Europe issues of national identity and nationalism arise.

There is a need to recognise that global factors impinge on most areas of our lives, not least in the field of education. Political and economic structures now range across the boundaries of traditional nations and states. As education has been a preserve of the nation / state, it follows that these new 'global' structures must have some influence on the field of education. As an example of how policies interact, Halpin (1994 p204) highlights "*education policy borrowing*" that occurs between education systems worldwide. Information is spread across the globe and influences states and nations, which become

economically and politically linked. Castells (1997: p2) reasons that our lives are shaped by “*the conflicting trends of globalization and identity*”. Traditional political, economic and cultural structures worldwide have been transformed. As a result individual states cannot ignore the influence of others and so differing power relations between nations and other organisations, such as the EU and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) emerge, which affect the life of the citizen. It is this definition of ‘globalisation’, which I shall use in the discussions.

The issue of globalisation brings with it the question of identity construction. If identity has been linked traditionally, at least in part to nation / states then the process of globalisation will result in the traditional view of identity being challenged by the reconstruction of states and economic and political structures. The construction of the EU from which the SOCRATES programme originates, is a reconstruction of nation/states. It therefore follows that traditional notions of individual identity will be challenged for those citizens who live within its boundaries. It is indeed one of the aims of the SOCRATES programme, to construct a new ‘European identity’. Brine (1999: p57 -71) argues the training and education policies of the EU are both used in the construction of the EU state and that this has an economic factor.

Within nations or states xenophobic and racist cultures may, as demonstrated by recent events in the Balkans and Eastern Europe lead to intense feelings of nationalism and then to civil or international warfare.

*“Culture and warfare are intrinsically linked. Education is in fact warfare by other means”*  
(Coulby 1998: p317)

Europe is and has been a constantly shifting space (Phillips & Ertl 2003) in which nations have sometimes been states and sometimes stateless. States have not necessarily



been homogenous nations either (Jones & Street-Porter 1997), (Thody 1997), (Giddens 1999), (Davies 1997), (Coulby 1998). For instance, Italy and Germany as nations did not exist until 1860 and 1871 respectively. Physical boundaries are constantly redefined as states become nations in order to legitimise themselves and ensure their continuation (Coulby 1998) and vice versa, as in the former Yugoslavia, Czech Republic and former USSR. One must ask in this context, what does becoming European mean in terms of one's national identity and culture?

Is nationality just a convenient marker or is it something more? Culture may be contained within the nation but a nation is more likely to consist of multiple cultures. So just how accurate a marker of culture is nationality? Recent wars in Europe have focused on the definitions of nationality and the boundaries of nations/states. Castells (1997) agrees that identity is constructed. He argues that the building blocks can originate in history, geography, biology, collective memory and religion of a group, amongst other concepts and that their construction is set within power relationships.

The importance of these concepts relate to issues of nationalism and national identity which are very closely linked to the curriculum and in particular to the project aims of the COMENIUS Action 1 project. In this way power and knowledge are linked in practice. In bringing Europe closer to its citizens the EU is presenting a package, which appears to be a united Europe, restructured and redefined. It would seem to suggest that through the concept of 'worthwhile knowledge' a 'European nationality' would be constructed.

*At the moment of unification, in 1860, it has been estimated that not more than 2.5 per cent of its inhabitants actually spoke the Italian language for the ordinary purposes of life, the rest talking idioms so different that the schoolmasters sent by the Italian state into Sicily in the 1860's were mistaken for Englishmen. Probably a much larger percentage, but still a modest minority, at that date would have thought of themselves primarily as Italians.*

(Hobsbawn, 1962: p89)

The European theme in the SOCRATES / COMENIUS project implies some sort of common European identity and thus a common knowledge imported by the curricular aims of the project. Just as the Italian example illustrates, the issue of national identity let alone European identity is fraught with inconsistencies. Human identity is shaped by knowledge (Coulby 1996). The issue of knowledge is contingent upon political culture.

### **3.7. Europe - the issues of definition**

*“--the EU's very contours remain shaped by such a multiplicity of forces that novel social, economic and political forms, some of them hard even to conceptualise, may be expected. This is especially true given the intensification of the unification process in Europe and the trend towards supranationalism.*  
(Sultana, 1995: p118) after (Bryant 1991: p190)

Bryant continues to argue there is a shift in the balance of power from member states to the community institutions through the single market. Sultana (1995) takes up the argument that the EU was built on the perceived need that 'nation states' were no longer effective trading institutions. This is developed to suggest that the EU 's agenda will lead to convergence of national policies in fields including education. He refers to

a: -

*“democratic deficit, a situation which partly explains the current emphasis in the Community on developing a 'Citizen's Europe' - to be promoted, among other ways, through an intensification of a 'European Dimension' in and through school curricula. It is a known fact that 'ordinary citizens' have not identified much with the unification process or ideal.”*  
(Sultana 1995: p122-123)

The European dimension has only moved into the school arena since the Green Paper in 1993 (EC 1993) which saw the establishment of the SOCRATES programme in 1995. The level of funding has increased each year and the European Commission's commitment to promote more programmes continues to grow. Within these programmes comes the problem of defining Europe. Is it geographically defined Europe (Appendix ix) or is it the Europe defined by membership of the 'club'? Even these categories produce problems as maps bring contentious issues of boundaries and not all members of the 'club' are 'full' members. Jones and Street-Porter (1997) discuss this fluidity of definition and argue that a "*pluralistic European identity*" (ibid.) would be contradictory to much of national curricula.

### **3.8 Education within the 'Market'**

There is little doubt that the EU is founded on an economic basis (as discussed in Chapter 2). However this is not to ignore the issues of nationalism, power and control, which are inextricably linked to this economic basis. Lawton (1992) cites both Marx and Hayeck the Austrian right wing economist of the 1940s as declaring that economic relationships are the dominant social relationship. Furthermore that social freedom is achieved through economic freedom.

In forming trading and other economic partnerships value systems must come into play and it is these systems, which are ultimately determined through the education system. Conversely the education system and thus its policy is determined at least in part by economic relationships, most overtly through its funding systems and more covertly through the issue of schools meeting targets for the acquisition of knowledge, linked to pay.

The market is becoming as important as the educational process (Ball 1994). The locus of control is shifting away from teachers, as performance in the form of the production of particular knowledge is traded. In this climate of economic competition globally, governments are not just dependent on domestic political issues but also on community issues linked to the interdependent economy. Sultana (1995) points out that 'The Round Table of European Industrialists' has pressurised the EU over their perceived need to unify education systems. Whilst the EU does not have the power to dictate internal policy to member states, it can pass general guidelines and recommendations to member states. Coulby (1994a) continues the argument in stating that

*"-- the economic interests of a uniting Europe are creating centripetal forces of Europeanisation pulling culture and knowledge towards the metropolitan centre, and this lies in direct conflict with the centrifugal forces of local, regional and even national identities pulling towards the preservation and reformulation of heterogeneity."*

(Coulby 1994a: p6, cited in Sultana 1995: p135)

Links to knowledge and the economic market place cannot be disputed; the question is more a case of how this knowledge is transformed into policy through the European dimension in education and how this is interpreted by national government.

### **3.9 Summary- Key points from the research base**

This chapter has focused on the theoretical literature, on which the study is based. Policy formation never takes place in a vacuum but is contingent upon the complexities of the social, political and economic context. This defines the locus of power and thus the issue of worthwhile knowledge within the system. Although policies are "*operational statements of values*" (Kogan 1975) there is room for manoeuvre within the system and this will become apparent in the section on the case study. Intended policy can be mediated or distorted through interpretation. The gap between policy implementation and policy

interpretation is crucial to understand especially when the policy is so widely applied as in the EU. Whilst national governments interpret the policy for a European dimension in a number of different ways, LEAs and thence schools that are even further removed from the locus of the policy, will impose their interpretations, which may further distort the policy intentions. The potential for distortion in the implementation of intended policy grows with the distance from the locus of the policy source.

Issues of power and control of education policy were discussed further through Kogan's (1975) view of policy as a discourse in which what is defined as 'worthwhile knowledge' is a consequence of the beliefs and values of that discourse. Thus pedagogy is controlled through policy implementation and the power to control is exercised by a system of initiatives such as testing, league tables, inspection and performance related pay for senior management in schools. However, this may be true at national level but at European level there is a conflicting discourse, which is competing for control of the curriculum and thus the definition of 'worthwhile knowledge'. "The Round Table of European Industrialists" was seen to be pressing for a unified curriculum. This emphasised the argument of both the right wing Hayeck and left wing Marx that the economic relationship is the dominant social relationship within the discourse. The struggle for control of the curriculum is not only at national level but also at European level. The result will be curricula determined by the dominant set of values and beliefs, which have been subject to global pressures. There is a complex set of players each with their own discourse, vying for control of the curriculum and this leads to a struggle between the creation of a common EU identity and a national identity.

Finally the issue of nationalism and the definition of the 'Europe' in the 'European dimension' needs to be unpacked. The difficulty in defining geographical boundaries is

apparent when examining the recent and not so recent history of Europe. Culture and heritage are two of the aspects to which the documents refer, but how are they dealt with within a Europe of shifting boundaries (Phillips & Ertl 2003) and minority cultures within states and nations. Furthermore the EU wishes to bring Europe closer to its citizens, if this is achieved what will the definition of Europe be? The discourse thus constructed will contain 'worthwhile knowledge' defined by those controlling the curriculum.

The next chapter will set out an appropriate research design for the study within which these issues may be considered. The policy-making process will be explored by an examination of key European policy documentation in Chapter 5 and by investigation of the views and perspectives of key players at all levels in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 will present a case study of policy implementation in one primary phase school. Chapter 8 will present the key findings of the study and will draw conclusions for future work in the field of the European dimension in education.

## **Chapter 4 - Research Design**

### **4.1. Introduction to the methodology**

The research design and methods of data collection and analysis used are outlined and examined in this chapter. The chapter sets out to explore how the methods selected relate to the literature and to the situation in the field. I shall explain how the research design links to the research questions and how these informed the decision to use a qualitative paradigm.

In section 4.2 a discussion of the methodological decisions leading to the research design develops the rationale for the selection of methods.

Section 4.3 further develops the rationale in a consideration of the strengths and limitations of the data collection methods. These are reviewed and related to the way in which constructivist and interpretivist approaches guided the analysis of documents and how the use of semi-structured interviews assisted in the interpretation. The selection of candidates for interview and the way in which the interviews were conducted are also considered. The rationale for the case study, which was used to illuminate the implementation of the policy, is also discussed.

Section 4.4 describes briefly how the analysis of the data will be treated and section 4.5 examines the ethical and methodological issues arising from the use of the qualitative paradigm. Important issues arising and criticisms and problems are discussed. The chapter concludes in section 4.6 with a summary of the issues discussed.

#### **4.2.1 Research Design and Initial Methodological Decisions**

The success of the EU programmes in the primary school classroom cannot be quantified, analysed or evaluated satisfactorily without addressing the underlying policy and the assumptions leading to its formulation. A qualitative approach is required to provide insight into the dynamics of the discourse in which the policy is located and to reveal how and why the policy need arose. The aim of this research was to explore the policy implementation of an introduction of a European dimension in education, from three perspectives; through the eyes of key players in the policy process, through documentation and by way of an illuminative case study of the programme in action. This was an area where previous research has largely focused on one particular perspective and has not examined in detail the implementation from three viewpoints. This research aims to examine: -

- Particular issues and the way in which these illuminate issues of power and control in policy-making within the political, cultural and economic context of the EU and education.
- The effect of the policy on schools, given the interpretation by policy makers of the message in the documents.

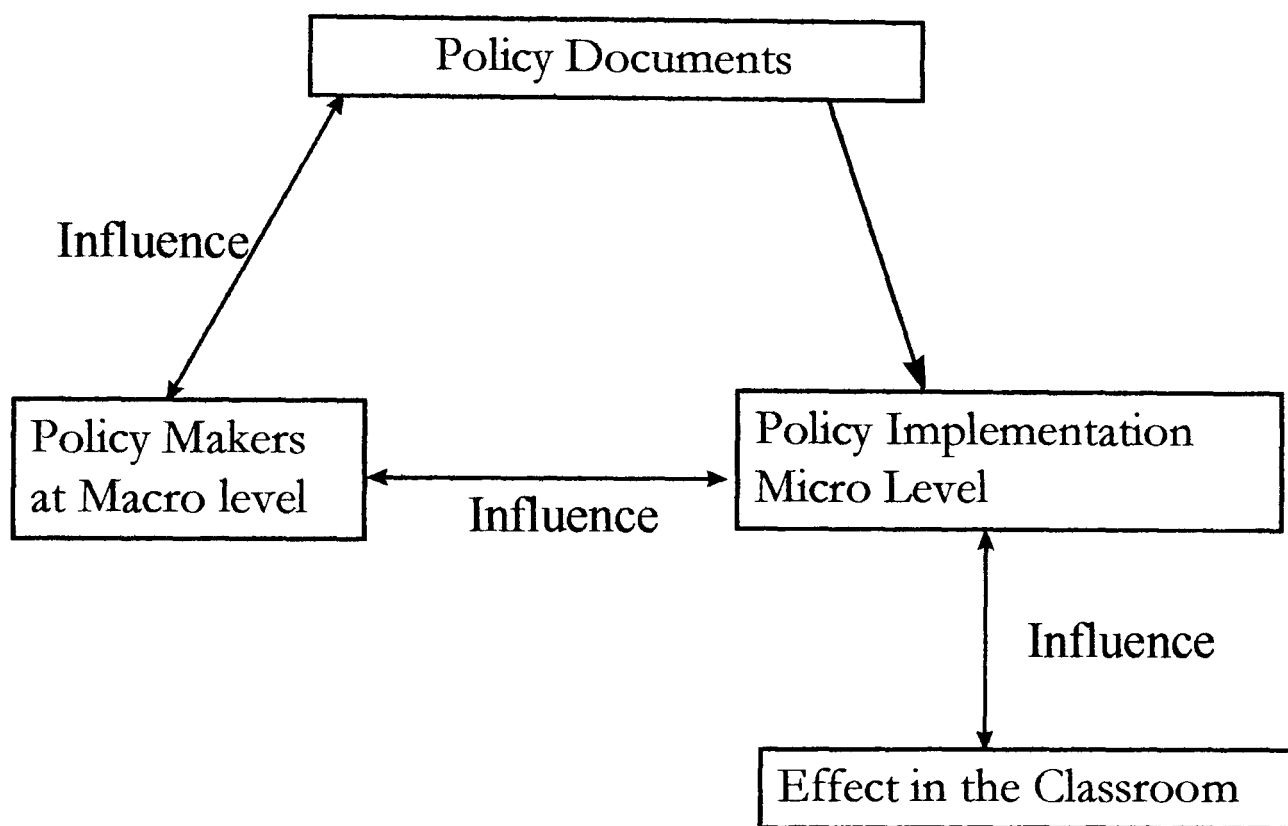
An approach was needed which would reflect the three very different data sources and would give a holistic view of the research topic. (Patton 1980).

#### **4.2.2 Use of the qualitative paradigm**

My decision to use qualitative methods arose from a consideration of how best to treat the primary source data. Once this aspect had been considered the subsequent methods of qualitative interviews and case study fell into place as supporting methodologies. The different areas of the research questions required different treatment. These fell largely into three sections: -



- a) The use of critical analysis of the documents underlying the topic, providing a basis for the research followed by two supporting methods to investigate issues arising from the critical analysis;
- b) Semi-structured interviews with policy makers some of whom were powerful people, to deepen and extend the analysis;
- c) An overview of a case study of a European COMENIUS project, to illustrate how the policy is translated into practice at school level. (Figure 3)

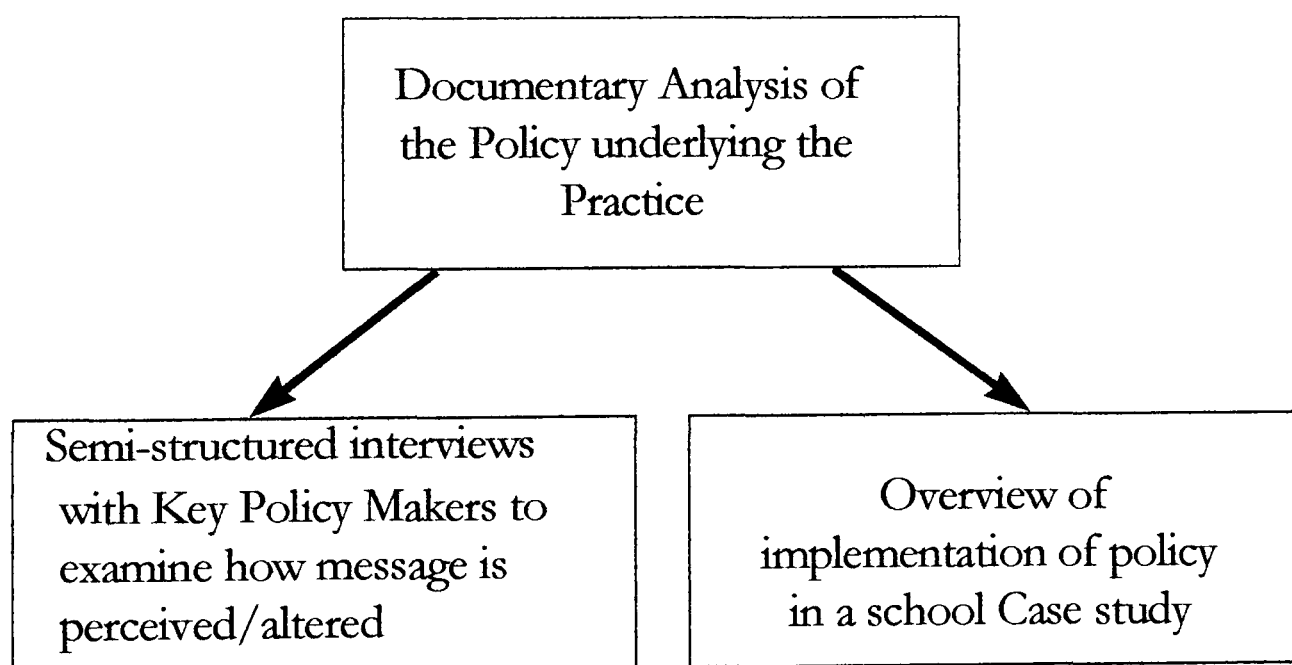


**Figure 3 Showing an overview of the interaction in the policy implementation process**

The employment of three methodologies reflected the different levels of the policy-making process and the differing perspectives. They would support each other and as Cohen and Manion (1989) discuss, contribute to reliability and validity. Thus the validity of analysis can be enhanced by the use of a variety of methods, making it possible to triangulate the data as described by Denzin (1970: p308).

Interpretation of data from the three sources enables the generation of theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), especially as the use of a hypothesis is not a practical starting point for research of this kind. Bogden and Biklen (1992) discuss this issue further in suggesting that qualitative researchers often address the research questions by allowing the study itself to structure the research. Hypothesis testing and precise questions are avoided, as are preconceived ideas about the study.

It can equally be argued as Halpin (1994) does, that the qualitative approach to policy research can result in fine detail description at the expense of the consideration of the effect of policy on the context studied. In this study I have tried to address these issues through the use of a multifocus approach, which will provide a triangulation of results, from three different viewpoints. (Figure 4)



**Figure 4 Showing how the triangulation of methods feed into the final analysis**

In examining three levels of policy implementation not only is there description but also a consideration and analysis of policy effect. The research design employs methods classed as relatively unstructured. I would argue that this allowed for a much greater freedom for

interview subjects to produce richer data and for the researcher to be in a position to give a much broader and deeper interpretation of it. Powerful people are far more likely to give information to the researcher when they are not constricted by set structures, which could mitigate in disallowing certain data. The case study (Chapter 7) illuminates policy implementation in a real context.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) suggest that the personality of the researcher and also their belief system influence the chosen topic and methodology. In this instance the topic was selected as an area of professional involvement. It was an issue I was managing within my own school and was an ideal opportunity to pursue an area of interest together with an expansion of my own knowledge of the area which I could take forward in order to support other practitioners and influence practice in schools. My involvement during the period of the study and also subsequently, on the “International education working party” of the LEA has become a forum through which knowledge gained has been used in future local policy plans.

In order to pursue the study it was necessary to focus on a key area of the policy to introduce a European dimension into education. The primary phase of the SOCRATES programme was the focus. All policies require an initial policy document as the legal basis for implementation. This will have been preceded by a whole raft of supporting documentation relevant to the issues addressed in the policy. The documentary analysis of these documents would need to explore not only implementation but also the assumptions underlying the policy. Data gained from these papers would form the basis of the study and would need to be supported by other methods. Documents relating both to SOCRATES and to the wider issues would need to be obtained.

Interviews were used to gather descriptive and interpretative data from key players in the policy process. Subjective perceptions would be part of this data and would help to address the issue of assumptions underlying the policy. Approaches to these people were made via a number of ways. Contact by letter followed up by telephone calls were used for local politicians whilst letter and contact via third parties, together with a certain amount of networking produced the contacts for national and foreign players and politicians.

Fitz and Halpin (1994) reason that access to powerful people provides information not necessarily available in documentary form or in the public domain. It may assist in identifying the way in which these key players exercise power over policy. This would highlight a need to:

*".....understand the ideological fields and institutional settings of the respondents. This requires a great deal of preliminary research and a sincere attempt to get the big picture"*  
(Cookson 1994: p127)

This influenced the decision to use a semi-structured form of interview and not to use a tape recorder in the interviews. This supplementary method provided supporting and complementary data to triangulate the data from the documents.

Lastly the case study used as an illuminative study was part of my ongoing work in evaluating the SOCRATES/COMENIUS programme in my own school. The project was carried out over a two-year period. Access to data for this method was relatively easier than with the previous two methods but it brought with it the problems of being a participant observer on some occasions and also the headteacher. This method varied from the other two in that the data collection was from a number of different sources, some documentary, some observational and others by interview with children.

Whilst in designing the study no hypothesis was proposed, as already discussed in this section, research questions were posed, as detailed in Chapter 1. These questions focused the interpretation and analysis of the data collected.

This section has given a brief overview of the research design and the decisions governing the selection of methods. The next section will deal with the methods in detail.

#### **4.3 Methods of Data Collection**

In this section the data collection methods of documentary analysis, interviewing and case study will be discussed and described.

The research paradigm underpinning the study is qualitative and the research is guided by a constructivist and interpretivist approach. Thomas Schwandt (1994) in Denzin and Lincoln (1994) holds that in order to understand the world of meaning one must interpret it. It follows that the researcher ‘*deconstructs*’ and then ‘*reconstructs*’ actions and “*how meanings are embodied in language and actions*” (ibid: p 118). Thus the critical analysis of “*open documents in the public domain*” (Scotts Typography – Sapsford and Jupp 1996 p303), leads to the development of topics and issues for discussion in semi-structured interviews with key players in the field under investigation. In this case the documents are those associated with the EU’s policy on the European dimension in education.

The methods adopted are guided by the purpose of the inquiry, which was to gain insight at different levels of policy implementation. An interpretative approach is

adopted in which these methods ask questions about human experience. In taking this approach there was a need to collect data from a range of perspectives. This was achieved by the use of interviews, document analysis and case study. The advantage of using three methods was to be able to triangulate the results. Primary source data of three different types was produced which enabled each to support the other and increase validity.

#### **4.3.1. Documentary Analysis**

Documents formed the legal basis for the EU's drive to introduce a European dimension in education. It was therefore pertinent to select documentary analysis as a method of data collection. In addition the advantages of using this method were that documents relating to the topic under investigation were easily accessible and this influences "*the credibility, authenticity, representativeness and meaning*" (Finnegan 1996:p303). It is also the case that written records can be more easily evaluated than other data sources such as interviews. Documentary analysis is classed as an unobtrusive measure. (Denzin1970). The belief is that the impact of the researcher upon the data is reduced thereby improving internal validity. (Jupp 1996)

One of the areas of investigation in this study was that of the creation of a discourse within the policy of a European dimension in education. The discourse would underpin the policy documents and be added to by them. Thus the importance of the examination and analysis of documents is stressed especially as issues of power may be part of a discourse (Jupp 1996).

The documents used for this analysis are primary source data. They are open documents in the public domain (Scotts Typography - Sapsford and Jupp (1996)). The documents were obtained from four main sources

- The web-sites of the European Parliament and Commissions,
- The European Union's Office for Official Publications, Luxembourg
- D.F.E.E. & Dfes documents sent to state primary schools in England and Wales
- Documents sent to primary schools participating in COMENIUS Action1 projects.

(See Appendix i for list of documents)

The documents were selected for a number of reasons, they met one or more of the following criteria: -

- They were written to be relevant to primary schools' COMENIUS projects.
- They were policy documents relating to the implementation of SOCRATES/COMENIUS at European level.
- They were policy documents relating to the European dimension in the curriculum at macro and/or micro level.
- They were documents providing background information about SOCRATES/COMENIUS.

The above criteria provided the basis for sharpening the focus in the document selection process. Other documents of a broader nature could have been selected but these would have widened the focus thus being counter-productive in this case. It was decided to focus on those papers, which related to the policy formulation and implementation process only. The need for the different levels of policy documents i.e. EU and LEA policy documents gave a view of the issues at different levels and linked

with the research questions, especially that examining power and control in the policy-making process.

The critical analysis of documents is centred around theoretical ideas and concepts (Jupp 1996). My analysis examined the assumptions and ideas underlying the policy to introduce a European dimension to education. This analysis (Chapter 5) set the scene for the subsequent interviews (Chapter 6), which explained these ideas, and for the small-scale case study (Chapter 7), which was intended to provide an illustrative example. The deconstruction and reconstruction of the documents was the focus. In order to do this, built in assumptions were examined. An examination of these assumptions and of the discourse running through the documents provided a picture of what issues were regarded as problematic and what was regarded as a solution to them. Jupp (1996) makes the point that:

*“the aim of critical research and analysis is to confront the prevailing knowledge and the structures that underpin it by providing an alternative reading and understanding of it”* (Jupp: 1996, p 304)

He further states that critical analysis traces the prevailing knowledge back to

*“structural inequalities at particular intersections in history”*  
(ibid: p304)

this was a particularly relevant issue due to the fact that the documentary data related to historical events in Europe (Chapter 2). It was apparent that there were a number of discourses operating. As Jupp (1996) found there is a *“Hierarchy of Legitimacy and authority”* (ibid: p313)

This hierarchy operated significantly within the data analysed with considerations of power and control being a prime factor. Indeed the research questions posed identify power and control as a main theoretical concept within the study and led to the selection



of this method of research. The concept of power as discussed by Foucault sits comfortably with the method of critical analysis used in the study

*“His viewpoint is that strategies of power and social regulation are pervasive and that the state is only one of several points of control.....  
.....For Foucault there are many semi-autonomous realms in society, where the state has little influence, but where power and control is exercised. In this way Foucault’s notion of the pervasiveness of loci of regulation and control encourages research and discourses in a range of institutional settings.”  
(Jupp and Norris 1993, in Hammersley 1993: p49).*

To summarise this section, the critical analysis of the documents focused on reading not only the 'facts' as laid out in the text but also by considering what is really being said through the discourse of the document. (Jupp 1996)

#### **4.3.2 Interviews with key policy makers**

Interviewing, as a data collection method is useful in understanding an issue from the subject’s viewpoint, it unfolds the meaning of their experience. (Kvale 1996). The semi-structured approach in particular enables the researcher to delve into the views of the subject and follow up any ambiguous answers. However the interview method as used with powerful people is complex and difficult, something which is not always recognised by the researcher. The data realised can be rich in potential and this is often underestimated in the drive to be objective (Ball 1994). In addition the interview can be *“an extension of the play of power”* (McPherson and Raab 1988: p64).

In this study the critical analysis of policy documents and associated texts guided the structure of the interviews and the selection of the interviewees. It was important to follow up the issues identified within the documents and to select key players in the policy process to interview. These would be at 1) national level, 2) LEA level, 3) From

another European country in the COMENIUS partnership in which I was involved. – (This aspect reflected the cooperation within the EU programmes and its subsequent impact on school projects.)

I intended to examine the influence of these key players both on the policy implementation and in the shaping of new policy. McPherson and Raab (1988) argue that in interviewing powerful people the “*assumptive worlds of policy makers*”(ibid: p33) is contextualised through exploring “*the ideas and values of key actors*”(ibid: p33). Since the policy was underpinned by assumptions this would be a useful tool for study.

The decision to make the interviews unstructured/semi-structured was made to enable me to probe deeper, beyond the initial response and to pick up on any areas of interest and on the expertise of the interviewee. Structured interviews whilst focusing on an issue would have been too restrictive. The focus of the subject would be maintained whilst the ability to examine more fully an issue was ensured. Unstructured interviews are not always the best way of collecting data. In the case of interviews with powerful people, the researcher must keep careful control of the interview and not allow the interviewee to take over control. Whitty and Edwards (1994) argue that policy makers are well versed in controlling information. As a consequence there may be difficulty in analysing their responses from interviews. People in general but especially those in powerful positions like to show off their knowledge and pursue their own agenda. However within a constructivist qualitative approach, this in itself can provide valuable data.

Burgess (1985) suggests that the unstructured interview needs to be controlled by the researcher, within a framework. This is particularly important if one is not to waste

time. These interviews were granted by people who had very little time and there would be no chance of a second interview if the data gathering proved not to be useful. Ostrander (1993) recommends the use of a schedule or framework to prevent the interview becoming just a conversation. The structure of the interviews in this study was arranged around the issues arising from the documentary analysis (see Appendix v for framework).

A decision was made not to tape the interview since this can be a sensitive issue, especially for policy makers at governmental and shadow government level. The benefits and disadvantages of the use of a tape recorder has been discussed by researchers, for example Headey (1974); William (1980) and Kogan (1994). I decided that comments were likely to be freer flowing without the recording although this made note taking difficult and the need to analyse the data soon after the event is paramount. This in itself was an issue for me as a number of interviews coincided and also came at a time when my school was preparing for Christmas.

Tripp in Burgess (1985) is critical of the interview method. He suggests that data may be affected by a variety of response levels from those whose views are not fully formed to those who are firm in their views. The alternative he suggests, a series of discussions is not a very realistic solution in small-scale studies such as this or in cases where extremely busy people form the majority of the interviewees. The issue of whether views are well formed or not are problematic in this instance.

Finally issues of the position of the researcher, dress and speech are important especially in the case of interviews with powerful people. Burgess (1985) quotes Tripp who questions the status of the interview because of such factors as non-verbal signals. It is

precisely these non-verbal signals, which added to the data collection and gave it a deeper relevance by extending contextual information. The physical context was also important. Local government interviewees were given the choice of visiting me, at school or of my visiting them either in the home or office. A number of local policy makers asked me to visit their homes whilst I visited Germany during UK school holiday periods to meet with policy players there. National policy makers requested visits to their parliamentary offices in London. The physical context emphasises the status and relationship between the researcher and the interviewee and is part of the respondent's perception of my role.

Taylor et al (1997) point out that when people are being interviewed, their own perspective may cause the account to be "*distorted or magnified*" in relation to their role and it is therefore important to include as many accounts and sources as possible in order to gain a more reliable and complete picture. The selection of key players was by definition restricted in that the interviewees needed to be connected in some way with the subject. However they were diverse in their roles within the subject area. This gave an opportunity to acquire data from different levels of policy-making and from different political viewpoints, so that I was able to gain an insight into the real picture.

Finally issues of gender, accent and ethnicity may affect the validity of interviews and matching interviewer and respondent may help to validate the data collected. However there must be few instances where this is a viable proposition and it is simply not possible in the situation of a lone researcher.

#### **4.3.3 Method of interviewing and structure of interviews**

The initial approach to the policy makers varied. With some, both national and local the contact was via a gathering or reception at which a conversation led to an informal

request. This was followed up by letter and then a telephone call. Others were initiated through a letter and then a telephone conversation to arrange the date and place of interview. At national policy level the network of personal contact produced a better response and was more likely to lead to agreement to be interviewed. Fitz and Halpin (1994) in discussing the factors relating to access to ministers and other powerful people, emphasise the importance of networks. There are often “*multi-layered gatekeeping processes*” (ibid: p40). They also stress the danger in “*reproducing the discourse of the powerful*” (ibid:p48). By making use of networks I by-passed many gate-keepers. At local level the policy makers responded well without the network of contact. However the fact that I was serving on the “headteachers’ international links group” obviously helped to bring about a positive response. I made twenty approaches to potential interviewees. Of these I had ten positive responses including three contacts made by introductions from the original list of people. (Details of the position of the interviewees is contained in Appendix iv).

The criteria for selection of the interviewees was: -

- an interest in international education in the EU
- an interest or professional position in education policy-making or implementation in the EU
- an interest and a professional position within education and policy-making in the EU

Two of the key players were involved in education policy at the macro level in Germany. The selection of the German politicians was partly through snowball sampling (as described in Chapter 4) and partly because Germany had been one of the

partners in the COMENIUS Action1 project which is the subject of the case study. The invitation to the French and Italian players to be interviewed had been unsuccessful.

The framework for the interviews needed to reflect the issues addressed in research questions 1, 2 & 3:

1. How does the SOCRATES/COMENIUS Action1 programme propose to bring the EU closer to its citizens?
2. What is the view of worthwhile knowledge contained in the programme and how is this presented?
3. What are the assumptions underlying the policy?

In addition to these areas I needed to supplement the questioning to examine personal interests and reasons for support/non-support of the policy and I needed to gain an understanding of the role each played in policy-making. Wider issues relating to the EU and its policies would provide contextual information. Kogan (1994) discusses his experience of interviewing powerful people and opines that it was more beneficial to allow the structure of the interview to be dictated by the subject after he had explained what was wanted. A checklist ensured that no issues were forgotten. In this way a view of the subject's "*construction of events and relationships*" (ibid: p71) was attained. The semi-structured approach adopted in this study was able to accomplish this end.

The interview commenced with a preamble explaining again the reason for the study. This was followed by asking the respondent to talk about issues and involvement in the international field. I aimed to allow the conversation to flow as easily as possible. This was a method used by Gerwitz and Ozga (1990) in their research into educational policy-making. I had a range of 'frames' which I used to bring back the focus of the

interview if I was not obtaining the data I needed (see Appendix v). Whilst it was possible to cover each frame with all interviewees, the depth with which they responded to each area varied with their relative interest and position. The perspective of each interviewee was unique.

In recording the data, attention was paid to the detail of the answers in order to accurately produce quotations. However realistically it was not an ideal situation and I learned to take notes at speed. I needed to record the mood and tone of the response and this was often done in the car or on the train as soon as possible afterwards.

#### **4.3.4 Case Study**

A case study element is drawn upon in order to provide an illustrative example of the implemented policy. The aim is to illuminate issues raised by the documentary analysis.

The discussion and definition of case study in the theoretical literature is varied, however there appears to be a common theme, which identifies it as a study of a single unit at a given point in time. Stenhouse (1984) has argued that case studies can be problematic when they are conducted without agreed principles and procedures. But he cites case studies as useful in aiding verification of interpretation. Stake (1994) identifies three types of case study, “*Intrinsic, instrumental and collective*” (ibid: p236). In terms of Stake’s classification this is an instrumental case study. It seeks to “*provide insight into an issue ... It plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else.*” (Ibid: p237). His classification is based on the purpose identified for the case study. Whilst Yin (1994) contributes to the debate by arguing that case study is:

*“an empirical inquiry that:*

- *investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real- life context, especially when*
- *the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.....*
- *cope with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result*
- *relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result*
- *benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.”*

(Yin 1994: p 13)

Yin's view of case study as an investigation into the context of real life, in contrast to experimental research where the context is contrived, confirms the view of this method as potentially meaningful and useful to the body of knowledge. However his views are supportive of a more positivist approach (Bassey 1999).

This particular case could not be viewed as representative of all COMENIUS Action1 projects because it is a unique project within a unique context. Focusing on a single unit brings with it questions about duplication in order to confirm results. Whilst this is a problem as no event or series of events involving the human element can ever be duplicated, the case study is being used not to draw conclusions about the wider world but to illustrate how policy implementation is contextual. It is an inquiry into a real life context. Good record keeping and organisation of data so that it can be examined at a later date will increase the potential for reliability of the study, as will an acknowledgement and explicit explanation of the researcher's perspective. The use of a single illustrative case study may be criticised for its lack of breadth and depth. However the defence of its use lies in the fact that it provided an example of policy implementation and explored the gap between policy rhetoric (intended policy) and implemented policy. Flick (1992) discusses *“multiple perceptions to clarify meaning”* (Flick quoted in Denzin and Lincoln 1994: p241) and acknowledges that no observations are



completely repeatable. Thus the advantage of the clarification of meaning from different viewpoints is reinforced. Finally the fact that this is illustrative of issues and not a full in depth investigation across the whole project, sets it apart from standalone case studies as identified by Stake (1994).

Bassey (1999) defending case study, identifies three types of educational case study

1. Storytelling and picture drawing
2. Evaluative
3. Theory seeking and testing.

In Bassey's terms the case study used in this research is of the theory seeking and testing category. Bassey argues that there is a case for these types of study to contribute to the theory of education policy and practice. Developing this idea and drawing on the work of Fourali (1997), he discusses the idea of "*fuzzy generalisations*" (ibid p11) A fuzzy generalisation is defined as a statement from a case study, which "*make no absolute claim to knowledge but hedges its claim with uncertainties*" (ibid:p12). He continues his argument with reference to the fact that in education there are very few instances where "*absolute*" generalisations are true in the sense of scientific absolutes. Fuzzy generalisations acknowledge the fact that the findings from a case study will not be replicated in total in any other case but may be true in some part in some similar contexts. It recognises the existence of many variables within the research, over most of which we have no control. This raises the profile of case study research and the possibility that it can contribute to a larger arena than just that of the study in question.

#### **4.3.5 Summary of the research design**

The research design was selected with certain constraints in mind: -

- The constraint of time; as a serving headteacher, I was only able to interview key players at specific times outside school hours and during holiday periods.
- Financial constraints; my research was entirely self funded which meant that visits to interview key players, especially those in another country needed to be carefully planned and costed.

In conclusion the methods chosen form a programme of interconnected procedures, which support each other. Triangulation of methods was selected to ensure validity. It was used as a method of crosschecking data gathered in different ways (Denzin & Lincoln 1994). It also seeks common findings and a convergence of information. Glaser and Strauss (1967) argue that the use of triangulation prevents the researcher from being too eager to accept initial findings as valid.

Critical analysis of documents formed the initial basis of the research. This was extended through interviews with policy makers and key players to examine the interpretation of the message and how it may have been altered in the process of implementation. A final piece in the puzzle was addressed by using the example of a project in action to illustrate and illuminate the issues arising.

#### **4.4 Data analysis**

The analysis of the data aimed to describe and consider the impact of the implemented policy and to identify common themes and relevant assumptions. Data collected from all three methods was analysed qualitatively. The documents selected were read and major

themes were identified and categorised. Data was sorted and tabulated using a spreadsheet system. This enabled the documents to be re-read in the light of the categorisation, in order to highlight the relative themes. It also enabled me to be able to identify possible assumptions underpinning the documents. The responses from the interviews were treated in a similar way. The responses were categorised into common themes. These were in part grounded in the data and in part derived from the documentary analysis. The data from the case study was slightly more complex as it took several forms, observations, documents, discussions with staff and children and children's work, as identified in Chapter 7. The data was related to that in the interviews and documentary analysis. Documents were read and analysed in a similar way, although it was not necessary to use a spreadsheet. Extracts were quoted to aid the discussion of the case study. Children's work was examined and analysed very much as one would do when assessing it for learning outcomes during every day teaching. Responses from discussions were considered and also cited in the discussion of the case study.

#### **4.5 Important issues arising and criticisms and problems encountered in the use of this paradigm**

In considering the use of this research design it was important to be aware of certain ethical and methodological issues. These are discussed in the following sections.

##### **4.5.1 Why a pilot study was not appropriate**

A pilot study following the research design but with fewer subjects is normal practice in research projects, in order to check out research design and to trial the method. (Borg and Gall 1983) In this instance it was not appropriate or possible for a pilot study to take place. Interviewing powerful people is a specialised activity and access to powerful

players is restricted, therefore the sample size is limited. The sample could not be reduced from the main study in order to pilot the interviews and piloting the interviews with a non-representative group would not have been useful. The case study and documentary analysis were not appropriate methods for piloting. In order to reduce the problems concerned with not piloting any part of the study, extreme attention to preparation was made. However this must be acknowledged as a limitation of the study.

#### **4.5.2 Sampling**

The selection of the sample for interview was made from key players in the field of European education policy. (As described in section 4.3.). Whilst it is not ideal to select the sample purely according to availability (Borg and Gall 1983), this must play a significant role as the research has to be carried out alongside a full time occupation by the researcher and has to complement that occupation. As a result data has to be easily accessible. Powerful people have a restricted time available for interview and the times were not always convenient to fit in with the constraints of my own role as headteacher. This provided conflict of interests, which had to be resolved at my own expense. The sample was therefore a small one but representative of policy makers at a number of levels.

The subjects for interview were all volunteers and this in itself can be regarded as a disadvantage. Volunteer samples are likely to be a biased sample as research has shown (Borg and Gall 1983). There is no doubt that in this study the interest of the volunteers in the topic produced some bias but using the multi-focus approach lessened it.

### **4.5.3 Confidentiality and the small sample**

When considering the ethical issues arising from the study, a small sample provides the researcher with a problem. Even though confidentiality is respected at all times, the possibility of interviewees being identified from their answers if a restricted and high profile group is selected is relatively high. In this situation the fact that the interviewees had strong ideas about the subject and were willing to make these known in the public domain mitigated against the breach of confidentiality as most players wished their views known. Data collected as a result of interviews or as children's work was stored and analysed with identifiers in coded form. The identities and specific locations were concealed and data kept securely (Bulmer 1982). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) warn that whilst confidentiality is maintained in the text of the report, some research then allows for identification through too much information being given in the appendices this too was considered in drawing up the appendices.

### **4.5.4 Researcher's viewpoint and perspective**

The accessibility to the research data has been discussed as a major factor in the approach used and focus of the topic researched. Also impacting on the research is the personal and intellectual experiences of the researcher (Okely and Calloway 1992). The researcher's own viewpoint contributes to the selection of the topic and has an impact on the outcome. Limitations of time, funding and resources as a single researcher working alone will also have an impact on the scope and focus. These issues however are not unique to this study. Research of all kinds will always be governed by the interests of those providing the funding and may also be constrained by the scope of the funding (Gubrium and Silverman 1989)

From the start I have used my position as a headteacher first and a doctoral student second to gain access to interviewees and documents and of course the case study. Use of the 'professional' label enabled access more readily as did the fact I was funding myself. Wycoff and Kelling (1978) in Denzin and Lincoln (1994) have researched the influence of the researcher's status on the research. In many studies the researcher is in a position of power relative to the subjects. In this case, during the interviews the position was reversed with those being interviewed holding the more powerful position. However those being interviewed did have a vested interest in ensuring they were fairly represented in the study. Indeed this was an issue of paramount importance to them. In the case study not only was I the researcher, but also the head of the school. This could have raised issues of both children and staff presenting what they thought was appropriate for me to hear and again this could be a limitation of the study as well as an ethical issue.

#### **4.6 Summary**

In this chapter I have described the research design and methods of data collection. In examining the research design I have explained the need for the choice of a qualitative approach and for the use of semi-structured interviews. The response from powerful people agreeing to be interviewed brought with it issues of researcher role and status. I shall be examining these in more detail in Chapter 6 when I analyse the data from the interviews in the light of the documentary evidence.

Finally I reflected on the ethical issues arising from the qualitative research design use of a qualitative paradigm in interviewing powerful people.

In the following three chapters, I present in turn the findings arising from the documentary analysis, the interviews and the school case study. Each chapter will deal with a separate data source. The presentation and analysis will be discussed alongside each other and the themes of power and control and national identity continue throughout. These will be linked to the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 3.

## **Chapter 5 - A documentary analysis of the assumptions underlying the policy**

### **5.1. Introduction**

In previous chapters I have discussed the background to the introduction of the SOCRATES programme and have outlined the research questions and the theoretical concepts, which have guided the study. In this chapter those ideas are set in the context of the analysis of data from key documents relating to the European dimension in school education. Chapter 6 continues the investigation through analysis of interviews with key players. In both chapters I draw on the data, discussing it in the light of the research themes of power and control and national identity. This chapter deals with the data and findings arising from the analysis of intended policy at the macro level. This will differ from the implemented policy as illustrated in the case study in Chapter 7, as players along the policy chain interpret policy in the struggle to control the curriculum and assert their belief system.

### **5.2 Selection of documents**

The documents analysed were chosen for their key role in the European dimension in education. They are in the main, documents of the EU's various bodies. They trace the process of the policy to introduce and then expand the European dimension in school education. I also draw upon documents from other areas, which impinge on the European dimension in education. Whilst analysing the original list of documents it became necessary to expand the list for clarification, or further information. (See Appendix iii.) They consisted of resolutions, recommendations, declarations and decisions passed by various bodies of the EU, together with extracts of treaties and



regulations for participation in the SOCRATES programme. A survey of public opinion by the EU was also included. The legislative process to which these documents is subject is detailed in Appendix i.

### **5.3 The documentary evidence**

As described in Chapter 4, the main aim of the documentary analysis was to draw out key issues and to enable me to relate these to the data from the interviews and later to the case study. The intention was that each would illuminate the other and provide an insight into the process of the policy-making and the assumptions underlying it. Each document was analysed and data classified into dominant themes. The status of the document was considered as this has relevance to the theme of power and control. The main documents were examined before the interviews took place in order to produce a background framework for the interviews. This approach would assist in setting the documents in context. Whilst the data fell into dominant categories in the data analysis, four main themes came to the fore, and one overriding theme encompassed these four to make a fifth. They were:

1. Economics and the Global Market – This includes the way in which the EU interacts internally and externally by way of trade and financial considerations.
2. Nationalism, Racism and Xenophobia – Issues of discrimination and stereotyping are included together with considerations of language and the cooperation between states of the EU.
3. Citizenship of the European Community / Union – This deals with issues relating to the dichotomy of being both a citizen of a state or nation and of the EU.

4. Knowledge / Curriculum – Issues of control of the curriculum and the knowledge base underpinning it are considered, together with views on how a ‘European Knowledge’ is constructed.
5. Power and Control: - As an encompassing issue, which relates to all the other themes through methods of control of policy and the corresponding outcome.

These areas are inextricably linked but in order to ensure the ideas and intended actions of the EU’s bodies come to fruition, power and control needs to be exerted in various ways, overall.

Each of these dominant issues in the documents are explored by describing and discussing the way with which it is dealt in each document. An analysis and discussion of how this fits contextually will follow in the last section of the chapter. It is interesting to note that none of the documents covered those issues concerned with the constraints and pressures, which militate against schools implementing SOCRATES programmes and which practitioners voiced. (Chapter 7).

### **5.3.1 Economics and the Global Market**

Political and economic structures are inextricably intertwined within a complex global order and impinge on most areas of our lives, (Chapter 3). This section identifies the way in which the EU’s interaction, internally and externally is economically motivated. It demonstrates the struggle for control of the curriculum and establishment of a European identity, through actions, which are consequential of the implementation of EU policy documents.

Economic issues feature very strongly in the range of documents. This is understandable as one of the main aims of the Treaty of Rome 1957 was to establish a

*“common market and an economic and monetary union and by implementing the common activities referred to in Article 3 and 3a ----- the raising of the standards of living and quality of life, and economic and social cohesion and solidarity among Member States”.*

(European Community 1957)

Although the treaty does not specifically direct any measures towards education, the economic aims of the European Community have been established. The first major document to promote a European dimension in education was the *“Resolution of Ministers of Education of 6<sup>th</sup> June 1974”* (EC 1974). This identified the need for a programme of cooperation in the field of education in order to reflect the economic and social policies of the European Community. It went on to say that

*“--- on no account must education be regarded merely as a component of economic life.”* (EC 1974).

Further documents dealing with the European dimension; appear to confirm this view, however the links to economics continue to be stressed. Further work in this area continued with the *“Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Education” in February 1976* (EC 1976). This developed the strand by recalling the “Economic and Social Committee’s” comment that education was central for a successful Community development. As a result a committee was set up to implement action. Pilot projects formed part of this action.

The real change came in 1988. The unified internal market was envisaged for 1992 and preparations were being made economically and politically. This resolution of 24<sup>th</sup> May 1988 makes significant comment on the role of education and in particular, the European dimension in education, by contributing to the unified market and to the

development of the Community and preparation of young people for their part in the economic development.

The Maastricht Treaty's (EC 1992) main function was to further develop the 'European Single Monetary Project'. The social element added to the treaty, linked economic considerations with social issues. Article 126, which relates to education, replaced the original in the 1957 Treaty of Rome and developed the theme of European dimension in education. Action was outlined and the Council adopted incentive measures. These led to the SOCRATES programme after the 1993 "*Green Paper on the European Dimension in Education.*" (EC 1993).

The adoption of the Actionprogramme SOCRATES by the Council was to further contribute to economic development by preparing pupils to take part in the economic and social development of the Union. Education and economics continued their strong links in "*Towards a Europe of Knowledge*" (EC 1997). This time knowledge was linked as "*Real wealth will be linked to the production and dissemination of knowledge---*" (ibid). In addition European policies were required to form part of the strategy to restore employment and enhance citizens knowledge and skills. By the time Phase II of the SOCRATES programme was established, the economic links were well developed and the themes of development of employability, strengthening of economic cohesion and developing an enterprise culture were explicit in the document. "*Into the new millennium*" (European Union 1999) saw this document noting:

*"an increase in the importance placed on education in skill and information related policies, including those which contribute to economic competitiveness and employment in the European Union."*  
(EC 1999)

The handbook “*Gateway to Education*” (Commission 2000) which sets out the regulations for participation in the SOCRATES programme, is forthright in the aims of the programme. One of those objectives is life-long learning aimed at facilitating employment for citizens in a changing market place. There is a presumption in this that a citizen will need to make employment changes more than once in a lifetime and that the learning forum will provide the requisite skills for an economically competitive workforce.

The influence of global pressures and an economically driven belief system (as discussed in Chapter 3), struggling for control of the curriculum is evident as is the intended economic basis of the documents.

### **5.3.2 Nationalism, xenophobia and racism**

Issues of nationalism, xenophobia and racism were central concerns when the original aims of the EU were established. These link strongly with the objective of attaining an economically integrated EU, as described in the previous section. It is unlikely that states that are equally dependent on each other financially will indulge in warfare between themselves. This section relates to the treatment of the interaction between the peoples and governments of the EU, with regard to discriminatory behaviour and the maintenance of peace. The rights of minority peoples are considered and “*incentive*” (ibid) and legal actions to bring about the objectives in the documents are highlighted.

The Treaty of Rome 1957 refers to the pooling of resources to

*“preserve and strengthen peace and liberty,”*

It continues in Article 6

*“any discrimination on the grounds of nationality shall be prohibited.”*  
(EC 1957)

In laying the foundation for the European Community not only is the economic union centre stage but the issue of discrimination is recognised and action is identified to deal with it should there be a need. Surprisingly this issue is not carried through in the *Resolution of Ministers of Education June 1974*; (EC 1974). There is no overt reference to the theme although there is an acknowledgement of the traditions of each country. It does however appear again in the *Resolution of the Council of Ministers of February 1976*. (EC 1976) It appears in terms of Action programmes for the children of migrants to enable them to adapt to the host country's language and culture, a move that might indicate a support of a new national identity.

Moving on to the *Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Education on the European Dimension in Education May 1988*, (EC 1988) The document refers to the safeguarding of human rights. There are also references to the importance of learning member states' languages and to knowledge of their cultural, historical and social aspects. Cooperation between member states and other countries of the world is also stressed, in a move, which highlights the global context of the policy (Chapter 3). Member states are asked to make every effort to implement actions including a policy document on incorporation of European dimension in education. This document is to be made available to schools: *The Maastricht Treaty Article 126* (EC 1992) continues in this vein but there is now a phrase which introduces *“incentive measures”* (ibid) as discussed in the previous section.

The documents establishing the SOCRATES programmes, Phase I and Phase II identify racism and xenophobia in their own right and measures to combat them are sanctioned.

A large section appears, relating to the importance of understanding cultures and languages and of improving education for migrants, gypsies and occupational travellers.

Promotion of an “*intercultural dimension*” in preparation for life which is

*“increasingly characterised by cultural and linguistic plurality”*  
(EC 1998a)

There is also for the first time a direct call for implementation of the programme at national level. This differs from previous documents in its directness and clarity, whereas previous documents have talked of the desirability of member states to take initiatives.

*“Member States shall take necessary steps to coordinate and organize the implementation of this programme at national level, in particular, by providing for the appropriate structures and mechanisms at national levels”*  
(Article 5, Decision no 819/95/EC of the European Parliament)  
(EC 1995a)

The significance of this is discussed in section 5.3.5.

Another significant document of the Union, which supports this move by the SOCRATES programme, is the *Declaration by the Council 98/C1/01 on respecting diversity and combating racism and xenophobia*. (EC 1998b) This document states that there are still racist and xenophobic attitudes which:

*“contribute to the disruption of social cohesion despite all efforts being made. These attitudes have their basis in cultural and socio-economic factors, but are exacerbated by a lack of recognition of diversity and of understanding of others.”*  
(EC 1998b)

The importance of education in combating these attitudes is stressed. *Towards a Europe of Knowledge, communication from the Commission* (EC 1997) does not contain any overt references to racism or xenophobia but it is implicit in the references to citizenship, which will be explored in the next section. Again in the document *Into the new Millennium 1999* (EC 1999) this topic is not explicit. However in identifying the need for flexibility

in citizens and prevention of exclusion in the widest sense this issue is addressed. Respect for member states in the content of their curricula is continued.

### **5.3.3 Citizenship of the European Community /Union**

The theme of citizenship is central to the SOCRATES programme, and is identified in its creation. It encompasses the notion of a 'dual citizenship,' that of the nation state and that of the EU. However this masks the struggle between these two conflicting ideas which becomes apparent in the analysis of the SOCRATES aims (as discussed in Chapters 1, 2 & 3) that it is closely linked to issues of nationalism, which impinge on citizenship of the EU as discussed in the previous section. In this section I analyse the way in which the theme is developed through the documents.

SOCRATES was envisaged as a means of bringing the EU closer to its citizens. It was also identified as a major player in: -

*“.....encouraging a positive sense of identification with the process of building Europe.....”*  
(European Commission 1998:p7)

The citizenship theme of co-operation is a strand running through the documents, starting with the Treaty of Rome. Identified mainly under the principles of the treaty, co-operation and networks are the main thrust by which this is to be achieved. As discussed in an earlier section the economic strand is linked to the idea of co-operation but also dovetailing with these themes is that of nationality. Later documents identify closer relationships between educational institutions as an aim. (*Resolutions of the Council of Ministers, June 1974 (EC 1974) and February 1976 (EC 1976)*). The safeguarding of human rights enters the agenda in the *Resolution of Ministers of Education, 1988 (EC 1988)*. This is intended to promote a sense of European identity. It continues by discussing the



preparation of young people to take part in the social development of the community. By the time we get to the establishment of the SOCRATES programme we find that Article 3 of the *Decision 819/95/EC of the European parliament* (EC 1995) refers to developing of the European dimension in education to: -

*“strengthen the spirit of European Citizenship”* (ibid)

The measures by which this should be carried out are identified in the programme as actions. We continue to find citizenship figuring in the later documents. The Declaration *“on respecting diversity and combating racism and xenophobia”* (EC 1998b), makes it clear that not only is this a moral threat but the issue is also a threat to the social cohesion of the EU and thus by implication to economic prosperity. The importance of education in the fight against racism and xenophobia is stressed and actions identified to counter it. Significantly, *Towards a Europe of Knowledge* (EC 1997) links the enhancement of citizenship with the development of employability through acquisition of competencies. The Community’s programme of actions is identified as needing to become more visible and this is an intention in the document. The visibility and thus the increased potential to instil feelings of citizenship of the EU are to be achieved in a large part through education programmes most prominently SOCRATES. However as discussed in Chapter 3 this is at odds with the pressures working against schools implementing the European dimension and can result in intended policy being mediated.

Phase II of SOCRATES puts citizenship at the centre of the actions to create a common European space, belonging to all citizens. It is linked with employability through development of competencies again as it did in *Towards a Europe of Knowledge* (EC 1997). The latest of the documents analysed, relating specifically to SOCRATES is

*Into the new millennium* (EC 1999) This highlights the issue that there is an urgent need for reinforcement of political co-operation at European level. By implication there is a lack of political cohesion with the enlargement of the EU. Education and training are again centre stage and seen as the way forward, soft skills such as creativity and flexibility to produce:

*“responsible and adaptable citizens”* (ibid.)

are required of the programme. The way in which these objectives of the EU are to be achieved is via the knowledge base of the programmes a move discussed in Chapter 3.4, knowledge being linked to state needs, in this case the EU. This is probably the most difficult area to address within a policy. As demonstrated by the EU's own surveys later in this chapter, the general public in the UK do not feel part of Europe and so it is crucial to the achievement of the EU's aims that the knowledge contained in the curriculum reflects European citizenship.

#### **5.3.4 Knowledge and curriculum**

Issues of control of the curriculum and the knowledge base underpinning it are discussed here in relation to the content of the SOCRATES programme. The concept of 'valuable knowledge and skills' is considered, as the documents stipulate and suggest particular contents for both national curricula and the programme itself. Concepts of European knowledge for example, which promote citizenship of the European 'state', or for economic competition, figure strongly in the documents. Texts, which 'encourage' or direct particular sets of knowledge are identified and discussed in the light of the increasing use of encyclopaedic knowledge in the national curricula of England and Wales.

### **5.3.5 Curriculum content**

In the Treaty of Rome (EC 1957), the focus was on the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Community. Education was not specifically mentioned. The 1970's saw a change with emphasis on programmes of language and culture to be developed and implemented for those moving to a host country.

Specific areas of curriculum appear in the 1988 Resolution of Ministers. With four years to go to the unified internal market in 1992, improved knowledge of the Community and the history, culture and socio-economic aspects of member states are foremost in the measures launched. In addition the measures are to strengthen the European identity in young people and lead them to a clear understanding of the benefits and challenges of the Community. Member states are asked to take action within the limits of their own educational systems. They are asked to include and promote the European dimension explicitly in the school curriculum. In order to support schools each member state is asked to provide advice, support and information. Materials and training are identified as ways of promoting school initiatives. At this stage there is no specific mention of the primary phase as there is of higher education. Secondary education is implied by the mention of exchange visits. However as discussed in Chapter 1, Economou (2003) argued that the UK government had been remiss in actively supporting the policy at micro-level, a move which indicates their part in the distortion of intended policy.

By the time the documents establishing the SOCRATES programme come into force the issue of curriculum and knowledge are foremost as a means of action. The curriculum content is based on knowledge of member states' languages, history and culture. This is to be used to: -

*“.....contribute to strengthening in pupils and students a sense of European identity, preparing them to take part in the economic and social development of the Union, making them aware of the advantages and challenges which the Union represents, improving their knowledge of the Union and its Member States with other countries of Europe and the world; .....*”

Decision No 819/95/EC of the European Parliament. (EC 1995a: p2)

There is a presumption here that the EU is both positive and desirable, the words *“advantages and challenges which the Union represents”* (ibid.) demonstrate this. It then follows that the knowledge content of any action to promote this awareness will also be desirable.

### **5.3.6 Prescription in a curriculum for the Global Market**

An educational programme, which is directed at specific goals, will focus on knowledge, which promotes those aims. In order to achieve this, one needs to be able to control at least in part, the philosophy of education and as a result the method of delivery of the knowledge. In this section the issues pertaining to this argument within the EU are pursued. They are:

- The diversity of philosophies of education in member states and the primary school structure.
- Curriculum content and subsequent teaching methods in member states.
- Acquisition of facts versus experiential learning.
- Collectivist culture concept of knowledge useful to the state.
- Accountability in education.

The SOCRATES / COMENIUS Action I programme, which is the subject of this study has further stipulations in the curriculum and knowledge content of projects in that they should be integrated into the regular activities of the schools. This seems to assume that the curriculum of the schools already contains the necessary areas of study. As Economou (2003) argues this has not been the case. This is an important issue and will be examined further in the case study.

Later documents, *Towards a Europe of Knowledge* (EC 1997), and those establishing the second phase of SOCRATES, emphasise the area of citizenship as a curriculum focus and the acquisition of competencies in order to enhance employability. Linguistic competencies are particularly mentioned. Knowledge policies are to be central to the EU within the knowledge society into which we are moving and for a unified state, which can compete globally.

The assumption that the education systems of the EU are poised to be able to take on the somewhat prescriptive nature of the knowledge content of the SOCRATES programme is problematic. Prescription is not overt in the documents but areas of study have been dictated in the documents and indicate a struggle for control of the curriculum (Chapter 1 & 3).

The methods and philosophies of primary schooling in the member states are diverse. For example two of the participants in the case study, the UK and Italy now have such different structures to their curricula that it was difficult to find a common ground as illustrated in Chapter 7. The UK has a very prescribed, centrally controlled curriculum, geared towards the “Standard Assessment Tests”, and the Italian curriculum was designed by the teachers to best serve in their opinion, their pupils at the time. The

prevailing national view of knowledge is reflected in the teaching methods used in each system.

As I discussed in Chapter 3, the collectivist culture seeks to promote knowledge deemed useful to the state. In the case of this study, the state is the EU. The knowledge referred to in the SOCRATES / COMENIUS programme is encyclopaedic in the main. It consists of knowledge about member states. Whilst teachers are able to a certain degree to introduce an element of investigation to the projects on which they embark, the fact remains that the pupils are predominantly acquiring facts rather than experiences.

Encyclopaedic views of knowledge are usually illustrated by whole class instructional methods such as those used in the English system's "literacy strategy" and "numeracy strategy". This kind of knowledge can be easily measured and accounted for! The funding agencies require measurable outcomes from COMENIUS projects in order that monies spent are re-imbursed. It is relatively easy to measure acquisition of facts. This leads to the next section, which discusses power and control. On the one hand the EU is endeavouring to create a favourable context through funding and through legislation both soft and hard. And on the other hand this is competing with the UK government creating its educational context by means of testing and the publication of test results. Both require the acquisition of facts within the curriculum and both have deemed their facts as part of a knowledge base that is useful to each state. However the two goals are not mutually conducive and demonstrate the struggle between the two for control of the curriculum (Chapter 3).

The national curriculum in England and Wales, prior to the revised curriculum 2000 did not seek to address the legislation to provide a European dimension. (Savvides 2003 in

Phillips & Ertl 2003). This has now been addressed in part, although optional units addressing Europe do not necessarily have to be taught and with other pressures on schools (as discussed in Chapter 3 – Figure 2) the policy will be mediated by school staffs. However the uptake of additional programmes such as SOCRATES/COMENIUS at primary school level is poor. A report by the Committee of the Regions in 1997 highlights that:

*“.....currently, some 60 million pupils in the Union are taught by over 4 million teachers in 307,000 schools..... Of these, the SOCRATES programme has directly benefited only.....5,000 schools under COMENIUS.....*

*In other words, the level of participation is very low in relation to the vast target population that the programme addresses.  
(Opinion of the Committee of the Regions of 18 September 1997 on the Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending the Decision 819/95/EC establishing the Community action programme SOCRATES)  
(Committee of the Regions 1997)*

The report identifies the major reasons for the poor take up as poor funding and inability to meet demand effectively, resulting in feelings of disenchantment. SOCRATES Phase II has sought to address some of the issues but at present the problems of bureaucracy and funding remain. I would argue that there are also other far-reaching reasons at the school level, which militate against the uptake. These ideas will be explored further in Chapters 7 & 8.

Therefore it can be argued that the implementation of a European dimension into the primary phase of education in the member states is no simple matter. The differing philosophies, teaching methods and curricula require change which goes much deeper than just the educational system, in order to meet the requirements.

### 5.3.7 Power and control

Themes of power and control and who has the power to control are overriding issues in the documents analysed and key themes of the study (Chapter 1). In this context power and control is defined as that which governs the way intended policy of the EU is implemented. At the present time, power and control of the EU in the field of education is intended to impact and obtrude into all other areas of life, but without political cooperation from member states, this cannot be realised. Promotion of political cooperation in the field of education is intended to be by way of both hard and soft law. Not all the documents carry with them the ability to enforce action and this is an important consideration in the struggle for European identity as against national identity.

The power of the EU has increased over time due to the fact that early competences (powers and responsibilities), which were not exercised because of political issues linked to the interests of member states, are now implemented in a changed climate (McGiffen 2001). However the continued poor uptake of Comenius projects indicates that control does not lie solely with the EU.

It is interesting to note that of the earlier documents analysed; *Resolution of the Ministers 6<sup>th</sup> June 1974* (EC 1974), *Resolution of the Ministers 9<sup>th</sup> February 1976* (EC 1976), and *Resolution of the Council and Ministers 24<sup>th</sup> May 1988* (EC 1988) all are of non binding status. However they appear to be most influential in their outcomes. Whilst SOCRATES did not come into operation until some years later, the 1988 resolution was particularly successful in playing a part in bringing about the existence of the SOCRATES programme and developing the European dimension in education. The documents are written as if they



were legally binding in the tone and the content used, for example in the extract from the 1988 resolution which appears in Appendix vi.

The resolution identifies actions to be taken and even includes a section on finance; the text gives the impression of a document, which carries the full weight of the law. It is clear that these non-binding documents form an important part of the decision making process of the various institutions of the EU and they impact upon any proposals sent to the council for consultation as they represent the views of the council. Since the roots of these resolutions are firmly located in treaties of the EU, there is every reason to believe that once the commission has drawn up a proposal addressing a treaty issue then the councils view on it will prevail.

Linking this with the concept of “subsidiarity” demonstrates how control is theoretically initiated. Decisions are taken at the closest level as possible to the citizens. In effect this usually means by national governments. In practice it is often as a result of ‘soft law’ from Brussels. However if an issue cannot be resolved at this level, or the objectives of the EU are not met by national or regional means then through the concept of subsidiarity the EU may theoretically, step in to take action.

The objectives in each of the succeeding documents are different but all have a common theme. *Resolution on the European Dimension in education* (EC 1988) refers to the educational dimension as an element, which will contribute to the creation of the unified market through the development of the Community. The document establishing the second phase of SOCRATES declares that SOCRATES is the cornerstone of the policy to bring the EU closer to its citizens and that education is to contribute to strengthening

political and economic cohesion. This is taken further by *Into the New Millennium* (EC 1999) here the need for reinforcement of political cooperation at European level is stressed. This is going to be achieved by amending and introducing new procedures in the field of education.

The power and control held by the EU in the field of education is intended to stretch to all other areas of life. It is the declared intention as already discussed, to use education as a means of promoting life in the EU to its citizens and to bring about economic competitiveness. Without political cooperation these means cannot be achieved and this is to be brought about by way of the legislative measures taken in the field of education, both soft and hard.

Theoretically, subsidiarity ensures that member states are able to organise their own education systems and curriculum through programmes such as SOCRATES. In practice there is a subtle attempt at control of the curriculum. The various directives and treaties have firmly established the EU's intentions and objectives and the part education can play. However as discussed in Chapter 3, the matrix of power relations and the way in which this policy interacts with national policy re-constructs the status of EU policy and shifts the balance of power and control.

In reality policy implementation can be subverted both intentionally and unintentionally. On the one hand the EU as a policy-maker endeavours to create a favourable context for its policy through funding and through legislation both soft and hard. And on the other hand this is competing with the UK Government creating **its** educational context by means of testing and the publication of test results. Both require the acquisition of facts within the curriculum and both have deemed their facts as part of a knowledge

base that is useful to each state but the two goals are not mutually conducive. The competition is in the time and energy available to school staffs. As the national context impinges on teachers' pay there are no prizes for guessing which of the two issues schools will prioritise. So we have a curriculum in history and geography, which could be described as having a European dimension, but pressures on schools particularly in the areas of numeracy, literacy and to a lesser extent ICT, militating against EU programmes.

An insight into the views UK citizens have of the EU may also enlighten the issue. The document *How Europeans see themselves: Looking through the mirror with public opinion surveys*, (European Communities 2001), provides responses to questions put to samples of citizens in each of the member states of the EU. In a question about how attached to the EU citizens felt, only 37% of the sample in the UK said they felt "fairly" to "very" attached. This was against the highest score of 78% in Luxembourg. When asked about European and national identity, in the UK 27% felt both European and British and 67% said they felt British only. This was against; Sweden and Finland where 61% felt both European and their national identity, Greece 60%, Denmark 56%, Ireland 53%, Portugal 52%. On the "nationality only" category 23% of citizens of Luxembourg felt Luxembourgesse only. This gives an indication on the likely extent to which EU policies could be mediated in each country.

Control of the curriculum is therefore not straightforward. Outside influences subvert the context created by the policy makers and contribute to the struggle for power and control of education policy and curriculum. In Chapter 3 I argued that policy and control of the curriculum needs to be understood with reference to the influence of major players in the field. Politicians both national and local must be aware of the views

of the citizen. Those views vary considerably and are contingent upon personal experience. The two way process in which the views of the citizen influence the politician and the actions of the politician influence the views of the citizen is paramount. It is a balance of power, which can move either way under pressures from within and without. The results of the survey above indicate how the views of the UK citizen can influence politicians in their support of European policy and how far the local or national government are prepared to uphold or implement EU policy. In Chapter 6 this will be demonstrated through the answers of some of the key players.

#### **5.4 Summary analysis of the issues raised**

Throughout the documents assumptions concerning the value of the EU and the desirability of its continuation are made. This is not surprising and I would not expect EU documents to be anything other than self-promoting. The documents contain many statements, which link the educational programme directly or indirectly to the economic prosperity of the EU within the global market. It is clear that this is a strong theme in the supporting policy documents to implement a European dimension in education. In addition there are a very specific set of beliefs guiding EU actions in support of the policy. These are demonstrated in the education programme content. This would seem to support one of the key arguments running through the study that educational curricula are subject to a current dominant set of beliefs and values and to the global economy.

As I have discussed earlier in the chapter, the power and control of the EU in the field of education is intended to permeate into other areas of life, and education is to be used

as a means of promoting the Union to its citizens. In this way economic prosperity is accomplished. The political cooperation needed to attain this goal is achieved in the field of education through both hard and soft legislation, thereby exerting subtle control of the curriculum. The key argument that there is a struggle for control of the policy and curriculum are manifest in the context in which the EU is set.

The European Community was initially an economic union of countries with the purpose of tying France and Germany together financially to ensure there was no repeat of the historic wars, as discussed in Chapter 2. In this respect the policy of a European dimension in education is following the intentions of the Treaty of Rome. Racist and xenophobic actions like those seen under the Third Reich would be difficult to implement in a community, which was economically interdependent. Whilst knowledge of member countries' history, culture and traditions form the basis of the Phase I COMENIUS Action I programme, surprisingly the issue of racism and xenophobia is not directly addressed. There is no reference to combating these attitudes which were so prevalent prior to the treaty and which have seen some resurgence in Europe in recent years. Presumably the assumption was that knowledge of member states would automatically meet this need. This is a misguided notion. Much more specific guidance is needed in this area. Recent national legislation has required schools to implement specific policies and practices, which meet these needs, but primary schools have long included issues such as tolerance and respect for others within their work. (The Phase II programme does directly address this issue).

As I explained at the start of this chapter, issues of power and control dominate, all other issues throughout the documents. The European dimension in education was and

is seen as essential in order to achieve the main aims and ideas of the EU; that is to achieve economic prosperity and stability for its member states and the creation of a European political space. Whilst early aims were to ensure political stability and the cessation of war between what are now the areas of France and Germany, as discussed in Chapter 2, this appears to have been subsumed into the economic aims.

The analysis of documentary evidence has shown how the themes of power and control link all other themes. Citizenship of the EU, as promoted by the SOCRATES programme is perceived as important in the documents, to ensure a feeling of European identity. This in turn is intended indirectly to play a part in combating racism and xenophobia. Economic prosperity cannot flourish if EU citizens are at war with each other and if citizens are economically linked they will find it difficult to engage in war. In order to achieve a feeling of unity, that which is deemed as relevant knowledge has to be transmitted within the culture. As already discussed in Chapter 3, in a collectivist culture, knowledge will be that deemed useful to the state. In this case the state is the EU and the knowledge is that which promotes citizenship of the EU and its economic prosperity. National political agendas interact with the policy and this contributes to the struggle to develop a European identity as against a national identity.

As I have shown in this chapter, in order to ensure the aims are achieved there has to be some method of enforcement whether overt or covert. Provision of funding and construction of the Socrates programme have been the most overt signs of the commitment of the EU to the policy. There was a realisation that the funding levels set at the start of the SOCRATES programme were not enough to ensure a realistic take up by schools, and an increase in funding part way through Phase I of the programme, with a larger increase for Phase II, indicated the desire for implementation of intended policy.

Additional demonstrations of power and control are through the various types of European legislation, as already explained. The most obvious is demonstrated in the phrase used in several documents discussed here:

*“—the Community is to contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging co-operation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems-----”* Article 126(1) Treaty of Rome 1957  
(EC 1957)

Having put in place the ‘incentive measures’, the EU appears content to leave the implementation of a European dimension in education up to the member states. The legislative process still leaves it open to possible actions from the EU if the measures are not adequate or successful. However it is not clear what these actions would be if initiated. The EU is in a difficult position in this respect as the curriculum and organisation of national educational systems is the domain of sovereign states. It would seem that without an action of public relations suicide the EU only has the option of an ‘economic carrot’ to encourage participation and the reliance of the ‘spirit of cooperation’. As we saw from the documentary evidence the funding issue was a source of debate and disagreement when increases to SOCRATES were sought.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

Education is firmly set on the agenda of the European Community. The struggle to control the implementation of ‘intended policy’ (Chapter 3 & 5) to introduce a European dimension to education lies at the heart of the EU’s aims. By means of these policies it will be playing an essential role in the creation of the new European socio-economic identity and a restructuring of the European ‘space’ (Chapter 3). However

the documentary analysis has highlighted areas of concern where national policy and European policy have opposing goals. The context of the English national education agenda appears to subvert the EU's education policy so that implementation cannot take place as intended. Further evidence of this mediation was illustrated by the EU's own survey into the views of its citizens. Intended European education policy will be interpreted and mediated by those at the micro (school) level in line with their beliefs and values and as a result of the UK agenda, so that implemented policy make look quite different.

The themes identified in this chapter will be developed in the next chapter through investigation and analysis of the thoughts and experiences of key players in the field of the European dimension. These findings will set the documents in the context of policy makers and others, powers to support or mediate the policy intentions. It will also set the scene in Chapter 7, for the illustration of how practitioners can mediate the intended policy. All three sets of data will be discussed in the final chapter, Chapter 8 in order that conclusions may be drawn from the triangulation of the different perspectives. From these, recommendations will be made for programmes in the field of the European dimension in primary education and for primary school improvement programmes in general.



## **Chapter 6 - Issues arising from the interviews with key players**

### **6.1. Introduction**

In this chapter I shall be discussing the issues arising from the interviews with key players who included UK national politicians, German politicians, local politicians, an officer of the LEA, a school governor and a headteacher of a primary school. All the politicians had an educational brief. As described in Chapter 4, the interviews were of a semi-structured format and questions were phrased according to the answers given by the interviewee. Although the area of discussion was loosely set by the research questions, the issues arose spontaneously during these sessions. In talking with the key players the dominant issues raised fell into six main areas. In addition to these the interviewees raised other issues, which did not fit into these areas. These issues will be dealt with last. The dominant themes were: -

- Concern about xenophobic and racist attitudes (this appears to be linked to historic events).
- Concern about the power of the media to incite xenophobic reactions.
- Britain's isolation and lack of awareness of other countries.
- Rhetoric not matching policy (national and local).
- Funding constraints on European policies locally and (for schools) nationally.
- Issues of power and control of various bodies, which determines the success, or not of programmes, through various constraints.

The discussion of the data gathered and analysed from the interviews will be treated in a thematic way. There were however some issues, which figured more strongly in, either interview or documents. This mis-match is useful to highlight in making a final analysis in Chapter 8, about the way in which the policy of the European dimension in education

is impacting on the primary phase education. Chapter 7 will set these discussions in the context of an actual programme implementation.

## **6.2 Conducting the interviews**

The rationale for the selection of the methods used and a discussion of the issues arising from their use appears in Chapter 4. However it is relevant to discuss here issues relating to the context of the interviews and how this impacted upon the data.

### **6.2.1 Context of the interviews: Interviewing powerful people**

In Chapter 4 I discussed the issues relating to interviewing powerful people. The status of the most powerful people interviewed was emphasised by the location of the interview itself. It would have been inconceivable for the national and international politicians to hold the interview anywhere other than an official office or a similar location. It was also pertinent that access was granted to me as a headteacher rather than as a researcher. Fitz and Halpin (1994) reason that data gathered as a result of these interviews

*“.....may be less important than the knowledge gained about the social and political context of policy making at this high level”*  
(Fitz and Halpin 1994: p5)

Ball (1994) argues that political actors have a vested interest in being interviewed both in public and private. It was certainly apparent that most of those interviewed were keen to have their message heard. Scheurich points out that:

*"...interviewees often validate themselves in the process of telling their stories"*

(Scheurich 1992: p24)

I had expected to encounter issues of power and control within the interview itself, especially when conducted at the London parliamentary offices of interviewees. However I was received as an equal. This attitude was influenced, I believe by my introducing myself from the start as a fellow professional, a headteacher, rather than as a research student. The interviewees were keen to discuss with me elements of my position. In particular the British politicians were keen to not only make known their views and those of the 'party' line, but also to ascertain, after the interview, my own views on education in general. In fact one prominent national politician approached me through a third party, after the interview to ask if I would make my school situation a subject of national debate! In the interest of ethics and of professional confidentiality, I declined. This reinforced the view of Taylor et al (1997) who point out in relation to policy analysis and access to powerful politicians:

*"There is also a politics, which goes on in the actual interview situation, or indeed in participant observation of meetings. Whereas in the past researchers tended to gloss over the impact of their presence within the research situation, more recently there has been a trend towards exploring and addressing the position of the researcher."*

(Taylor et al 1997:p41)

The politics within this interview situation was evident by the action of the politician following it. I was a member of a profession, which was of interest to all political parties as a source of power and control, in the media battle for party political supremacy.

### **6.2.2 Context of the interview: Non-verbal signals**

The issue of power and being treated as a fellow professional continued through the dress code adopted by myself as interviewer. I had decided to mirror the expected dress code of the interviewee and dress formally. In this way I hoped to both put the interviewee at ease and be taken seriously as a professional. It was obvious from the surroundings of the parliamentary offices and from the dress code of staff working there that any deviation from this style would have given out quite a different message. Engaging neuro-linguistic programming principles of matching, assisted in a dialogue on equal terms with the subject. Neuro- linguistic programming used in this way focuses on the concept that most people are more comfortable with others who are similar to themselves. By behaving or dressing in a similar way, the subject feels more comfortable and accepting of the interviewer. Ethically this did not pose problems as this mode of dress is frequently worn as part of my day to day work in school. The exception to this dress code occurred when interviewing European politicians, where a more relaxed business wear was required! And when interviewing a senior civil servant, I found the entire department in casual wear!

### **6.2.3 Encouraging information flow**

During some interviews I had to work hard to initiate and continue the flow of the conversation, everyone wanted to give me “the right answers” - this proved to be one of the most difficult areas to handle and I had to resist prompting. The easiest people to interview were those who had a real passion for the subject. However politicians having the area as a brief did not necessarily speak as they felt, whilst they were able to give the party line, they found any deviation where personal views might be required, difficult.

As the interviews proceeded it became more apparent that the informal style was the one most appropriate to the research. People's experiences differed so vastly that it would have been inappropriate to have had one set of questions, so much would have been cut out. As it was I was able to encourage people by focusing on the main areas of research, using gentle back up prompts to ensure coverage of all areas.

#### **6.2.4 Status of the Interviewer and ascribed characteristics**

Every interviewee was interested to hear of my research and at times it was difficult not to reveal too much and thus appear rude. I was treated as a professional whose opinions mattered and who was to be taken seriously. I was particularly well received in respect of the fact that I was an education practitioner and that the research impacted on the work I was doing in school.

One of the important contextual factors impinging on interviews is that of the interviewee's perception of the interviewer. Wilson (1996) discusses the impact that "*Ascribed characteristics*" can have on replies. This is known as "*inter - interviewer variability*". I am convinced that the reception I received from all the interviewees would have been different if I had not been a headteacher. The response to questions must also have been contextual but in eliciting a 'conversation- like' interview largely in interviewee's own surroundings, I was able to minimise the effect and increase the validity of the data.

### **6.2.5 The physical context of the interviews: An extension of power play?**

The interviews were conducted in the main, at the offices of the key players. The exception to this was in the case of two of the local politicians and the school governor, who invited me to their homes and one local politician who came to my school to be interviewed. The place of interview in the case of the person who visited my school appeared to hinder the process and I would not encourage this in any future study. The interviewee seemed very uncomfortable in the surroundings despite my moves to put him at ease. I was surprised at this as he was an experienced local councillor who had connections with schools both as a governor and as a former teacher. It was difficult in this situation not to lead the questioning by prompting, which was obviously what he wanted. However despite these difficulties I was able to draw out some useful data. Other interviewees were very forthcoming on their home territory and required only gentle prompting to ensure they addressed the areas of significance.

Europe was obviously an area, which greatly interested all interviewees, and once the loose structure of the interview was introduced they talked widely. I felt it was important to allow the conversation to flow as data of interest and importance was shared and other data of a peripheral nature but never the less useful was acquired. This peripheral data added 'colour' to the picture. A genuine bond of interest was formed between interviewer and interviewee, without the interviewer giving away their own views. This was particularly easy in the case of the national politicians whose passionate views took over! They would have been oblivious of my views even if I had made them explicit! This shared interest was also useful in making contacts for interview. Several of the interviews took place through 'snowball sampling' (Chapter 4). The contacts were made through other interviewees. This was the case with one of the international contacts and with two national politicians.

### 6.2.6 The background of the interviewees

The background of the interviewees appears to play an important part in their views. Their perceptions are contextual and so previous knowledge or experience will impact on this. As I discussed in Chapter 3, policy is never produced in a vacuum but in response to political, economic and social context. Educational issues according to Lawson (1992) are linked to

*“deep rooted, sub-cultural, and political beliefs, attitudes and values”*  
(Lawton 1992: p11)

Certainly the players in this study have been influenced by their experiences which now influence their support for policy initiatives in the international field.

All the local politicians, plus one of the German politicians had personal contact or experiences relating in some way to the Second World War or its legacies, or had very strong religious views relating to war and peoples' treatment of each other. It was not clear if this was the case for the remaining interviewees. These experiences appear to have had a major impact on their thinking and desire to be involved in projects or initiatives, which combat racism and xenophobia, or promote international understanding. The range of initiatives in which they had involvement was varied, but almost all involved the person in spending time in addition to that of their job or profession in pursuing the goal. One person, Mr Winter a school governor and ex- city councillor, was a member of the first town twinning with Germany after World War II and is actively involved in continuing to build International links. Another, Mr Jones an LEA officer is involved in promoting SOCRATES type programmes because the enthusiasm of others and the change he saw in peoples' thinking and actions convinced him that this was the right thing to do.

The remaining interviewees had gained an interest in international and European issues during their professional lives. Ms English a leading national politician in the opposition party of the British parliament had gained an interest through the commercial and financial world. She had worked in the international sector and had also developed an interest in education through involvement in politics. Ms Davies a Member of Parliament, for the government had a professional interest in education having been involved in this sector before becoming an MP. Herr Schmitt a German Minister of Education for a lander had also been an educationalist. His interest in the European dimension was as an Education Minister but also as a function of a strong personal Christian belief. Finally the background of Mr Lean, the headteacher in the interview sample, was as a professional who had become involved through the enthusiasm of others and through contact with international educationalists whilst undertaking further professional studies. This had convinced him of the need to enable children to have a greater understanding of other cultures.

### **6.3 Themes arising from the interview data**

The presentation of data from the interviews is treated thematically as discussed in Chapter 4. Analysis links the intended policy of the documents with the rhetoric of key players and their perceptions of implemented policy.

#### **6.3.1 Concern about racism, xenophobia and Britain's isolation**

In considering the interaction of the UK with Europe and the rest of the world, concerns arose that were common to all interviewees and underpinned a great deal of



their reasoning. This section deals with those themes of racism, xenophobia and Britain's isolation, centred on the role of the popular press in maintaining and inciting negative attitudes towards others.

The interviewees' desire to find ways of counteracting this was driven in the main by their own close contact with the outcomes of war or its repercussions. The need for a unified Europe appeared to be a common goal. There was a shared view of the definition of racism and xenophobia but the issue of Britain's isolation was seen as a disadvantage for two differing reasons. From one viewpoint economic factors figured strongly as a reason to change things and the opposing view was that the isolation resulted in negative attitudes towards other peoples.

Mr Fish, a local councillor, has a strong Christian belief and it was this and his visit to a concentration camp in Austria, which motivated him to a commitment to Europe in the broadest sense and to his work as part of the local authority's European group.

*"I had a deep feeling of sadness in tragic loss of life. This is the bloodiest century in human history and it still continues. Europeans are always involved in this."*

*"Europeans **must** promote peace and understanding, we can't go back on that. Peace through economic security and cultural understanding can be an uphill struggle- Xenophobia lies just below the surface – the popular press are involved in this."*

*"In answer to those who would say that Europe has nothing to offer us and we are only shoring up unstable economies. I say in all Europeans' work there ought to be principles of what we can give as well as what we get out of it. We encourage children to share sweets and toys and to play nicely with others; the same should apply here. With regard to the Eastern Bloc, we may have more to offer than they have to give, in order to promote stability on the continent – such as helping in the establishment of governments."*

He felt that the media quickly stir xenophobic reactions, the way in which the public quickly react as in the Falklands war, the “beef war” and the battle of British lamb are examples. He believes that xenophobia is just below the surface of people’s consciousness. Mr Jones is disgusted at the misplaced blame, which is appropriated in these cases. He believes that xenophobia is unknown in children and hence supports any programme, which will give them a knowledge base to resist these views to which they will be exposed.

Mr Heal a second councillor from the same local authority and ex-language teacher with experience of exchange visits highlighted the issue of racism and preconceived ideas of European countries particularly in the media.

*“Perhaps its because they can’t speak the language” he said. “I have never had a problem with Germany. I remember seeing a film about Belsen at age nine. I was appalled that men could do this to one another. Some say Germany is an uncivilised country – I don’t know why. I think the idea of bringing young people together is good. Most don’t have a great deal of contact with others. A week on the Costa Brava doesn’t do much for understanding but school exchanges are not the best way. People tend to stay with their English friends all the time they don’t really get to know their hosts. The effects are fairly limited.”*

He felt that knowledge of other countries could be viewed as criticism of your own country and maybe this was an issue in SOCRATES.

*“Its important to start language learning early but there are problems at Secondary School if everyone doesn’t do it. We are all tied up with Europe. I can’t accept that we continue to ignore the fact that other people exist. We don’t want to be left out but we will be soon.”*

Herr Rott a German politician and educationalist had a very international childhood. Brought up on the borders of France and Germany he was educated in the 1970s and 80’s in six different countries, including France and his home country of Germany. Herr Rott is much younger than the majority of the players.

*"I will never forget two nights in my life, the first when the border was taken down at our local crossing – this was an impressive event and the second was when the Berlin wall came down. A moment that opened the future for incredible new perspectives in my eyes"*

His belief is that the future citizens of Europe can teach the older generations about partnership. In this respect the SOCRATES programme is important as a tool to bring Europe closer to its citizens.

*"Grandparents will rather listen to their children than a politician from Brussels. It (SOCRATES) is also important in the fight against racism and xenophobia. Racism can only be eliminated if one has met the other race and discovered that they are just as fun loving or as boring as oneself. Once this has happened the earlier the better, a person will no longer be able to be a convinced racist at least, as his own knowledge and own experience tells him otherwise. You will never find as many racist problems in mixed areas and mixed schools as you will in ghetto like settings."*

Mr Lean expressed a concern about the attitudes which young people pick up from the adults around them:

*"So many of our young children already have biased and xenophobic beliefs which they have picked up from their parents, comics and the media. The Germans and the beach towel is still very much a current racist view as is the negative view of the French. What worries me is that very few of our children have had the chance to meet real Germans in their own country. Germany is still not a holiday destination for the British and even if it was I doubt if the average person would actually venture outside the very unrepresentative holiday areas, which is what generally happens in today's package holiday world. At the basis of this is also the lack of linguistic skills on the part of not only the British but also the middle aged to older Europeans. Contrary to public perception all Europeans do not speak English. This was very much brought home to me in meetings of my COMENIUS project. Meetings were difficult because of the lack of language skills of **all** the partner countries. In the end the services of a languages student were sought!"*

The views expressed by this headteacher were echoed by the LEA officer, Mr Jones who said that in his experience

*"Europe was seen as something over the water"*

He spoke of an arrogant attitude which pervaded through from politicians to the citizen that is

*“out of kilter in our perspectives. Our isolation is displaced as racism.”*

Mr Jones said headteachers had frequently spoken of the xenophobia of parents and children. One school exchange visit nearly folded because no one would act as host to the foreign children.

*“It is increasingly difficult to get exchanges going, even the free ones.”*

He suggests this lack of interest reinforces the need to tackle the reasons behind running the visits in the first place.

*“The foundation of this goes back to Agincourt, - post Empire - a clichéd mistrust of the French.”*

Mr Lean continued that there was a need to balance the view of “nation” as portrayed in the popular press.

*“.....a need to stop being inward looking as individuals and realise other people are out there with other ways of doing things, some better some not. I don't think we can get this from multi-cultural Britain, everyone lives here in the same country – we need to be aware of other countries not just other traditions in our own country. Too often we see people as stereotypes.”*

Ms King the senior civil servant in the DFEE agreed that there was

*“a huge Euro-sceptic audience out there fuelled by the popular press.”*

There was a great need for programmes to counteract this imbalance. The DFEE had contracted “The Central Bureau” to act as the funding and administration agency for a period of seven years from 2000 to administer the programmes.

Ms English, the national politician with the education brief, felt that it was useful to look at what was happening in your own country through someone else's eyes and that following a programme like SOCRATES would help this. She didn't think that national identity would be compromised in this way. Following a programme reinforces differences

*"Patriotism is a good concept but bad if its taken too far. There are national characteristics but this shouldn't be a threat."*

She continued to explain that SOCRATES expands horizons, particularly personal horizons. These were interesting comments in the light of the fact that Ms English had felt that there should be no EU or government control over such programmes. The inference is that teachers would initiate the projects themselves. However Ms English also maintains that the curriculum is already overcrowded.

Another national politician, Ms Davies discussed the issue of challenging preconceptions about national identities.

*"Only when we share ideas can we value what we have. We can't have a national identity. We are all invaders and settlers in this country. It's the richness it brings to your life. Do you really only eat Fish and Chips in this country? Of course not! Ultimately the purpose is respect and knowledge. I have no problem with the European Dimension. It gives understanding of our background. Stops attempts to score points."*

The interviewees all agreed without exception of the need to counteract the very real racism, xenophobia and preconceptions, which abound. In the views of the interviewees these are fuelled by the popular press. But whilst these ideas remain, there is some acknowledgement by the British players of the pressures militating against implementation of the programmes. Surprisingly none of the players saw the programme as a threat to national identity.

It appeared that those who had had close contact with either the repercussions of war or of xenophobic actions, Mr Fish, Herr Rott, were the most committed to promoting the European dimension and to the restructuring of the European Space. Herr Rott in particular had a vision of how this might be achieved through children. His passion for this ideal was unmistakable and appeared to be borne out of his childhood experiences. This commitment to the ideal was not confined to these two, however whilst the others

all agreed with the sentiments of Herr Rott and Mr Fish, they did not share the passion, which permeated those interviews.

The discussions with the key players focused on the more imminent issues of racism and xenophobia. Certainly both documents and policy makers were speaking with one voice in this respect. However there was a distinct difference in how the players viewed the policy implementation. Mr Fish and Mr Jones in particular echoed the sentiments of the documents in emphasising the importance of stability in Europe as the prime factor and there was an acknowledgement that economics played a crucial part in this.

In the view of some of the UK players the idea that someone else in Europe is receiving financial support at the cost of the UK is an idea, which the press and media use to incite racist and xenophobic views. The power of the press and media to manipulate the views of the public was acknowledged as an issue. However in the next chapter we see the press acting in a different role by promoting a European project.

The overriding sentiment from key players was that an understanding and knowledge of others was crucial to a stable Europe and this concurred with the aims in the documents. The view of the method by which this is best achieved varied. However it was widely acknowledged that the past model of school exchange was not the most effective way. Contact with the host was limited, as pupils tended to stay with their own friends. Mr. Heal said:

*"It's good in theory to start on the young but other influences – parents, media, peer pressure are there."*

*"The effects (of school exchanges) are fairly limited. They are not the best way. People tend to stay with their English friends. But the idea of bringing young people together is good.- They don't have a lot of contact."*

Present exchanges were difficult to arrange, as families did not want to take part. The reasons for this could be many and varied. Changes to the legislation on child protection and an increased awareness, nationally of child abuse may be one factor. The reluctance of school staffs to take on the responsibility in a climate of increasing litigation and blame could also be contributory. Mr. Jones expressed his frustration and said:

*"It's hard to get exchange visits going – even free ones. We had to cancel a couple. Travel is commonly cited – it's only seen as travel. – Also there's the pressure on schools- SATs, Ofsted. Teachers aren't able to inspire students to go and they haven't got the time. – The Internet makes us very solitary.*

Therefore it would seem that the way forward is through programmes such as COMENIUS, which aim to expand horizons. The verbal support for these programmes was unanimous. However there was little understanding from those who were not at the school level of what was entailed in running a programme. As one would expect, the further from the micro-level the interviewee was, the less they understood of the logistics of a project. In particular, the view of national politicians seemed to be that it was easily run after everything else on the national agenda had been addressed; that is literacy, numeracy and ICT. The consideration of the external pressures militating against schools running these programmes appeared to be non-existent. Ms. English said that schools in her constituency were running COMENIUS Projects.

*"There are great benefits to teachers and pupils about going outside standard thinking and teaching. – Working together in different styles. – Mutual learning processes taking place.- opening up and sharing experiences. It's looking through different eyes. – The benefit of broadening horizons"*

The promotion of a unified Europe with citizenship of the EU as a marker of identity (Grant 1998) has the potential to create the racism and xenophobia the documents are trying to confront. Membership of the Union infers that although members are equal and alike in some way, they are different from those who do not belong to the Union. Theoretically, whilst the concept of war between members of the union is negated, this does not preclude war with the members of other 'clubs'. Ms English alluded to this

when she pointed out that trade and political links with other parts of the world should continue and be developed by the UK. Complications arise when members belong to more than one 'club' such as NAFTA, the North Atlantic Free Trade Association and MERCOSUR. In combating racism and xenophobia, the struggle for a European identity may be no more beneficial than the national identity, although membership of a larger 'club' may ensure more power and control over others.

### **6.3.2 Power and control, Where does it lie?**

In this section the issues of power and control are considered, as they were discussed in the interviews. The definition of power and control in this context relates to intended policy-making and implemented policy and the ability of various bodies to bring about action or to maintain the status quo through interpretation of policy. The source of power is viewed widely from control of funding to external pressures put on schools.

The issues of power and control and where both lie were treated at two levels by the interviewees: i) that associated with national government and ii) that associated with the EU, reflecting the struggle between the two to establish their identity. At no time was discussion of power and control associated with the school at the micro level.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the EU had the power to intervene through the principle of subsidiarity, in the case of nations reneging on policy actions; either intervention does not happen, or the EU is content with the aspects of the national curriculum which are Euro-centric, and with the relatively low level of uptake of SOCRATES projects. Savvides (2003) concurs with this view in discussing the



PRESTIGE research. All the interviewees mentioned funding as an issue controlling the programmes. In particular at the LEA level there is a lack of funding available for initiatives, as councillors have to listen to ratepayers priorities in spending.

*Mr Heal felt 'frustrated' by financial constraints "The brief of the European Group on the Council is limited because of finance - this makes us relatively powerless. The European Dimension in Education should ideally be a strand of the Education Committee with funding - funding is tight in all areas- we are grateful for what education does - we are lucky to have the interest of the Deputy Director. Links depend on individuals to a large extent - finance problems militate against it"*

Another councillor, Mr Fish echoed these sentiments.

*"The European Group is only a working group. It has no real power. The power lies in the power of persuasion. There is a need to move cautiously as the European Group is not an official power bearing committee the public is not receptive to visits to other countries for councillors. But the time is right to get the other councillors on board. We can learn from councils Europe wide, we all have common issues and problems, but this needs funding and there is a need to justify every penny spent – Euro projects tend not to be viewed as important or necessary"*

Mr Jones an LEA officer confirmed the view that spending constraints exercised maximum power and control over projects:

*"Funding issues and time constraints put pressures on schools. The rhetoric does not match the practice. There are no links between the UK funding agency and the DFEE. And there are no links between SOCRATES and national imperatives in education. – Its not joined up! - A lack of national steering. Standards funding in International Development is small and is vulnerable to cutting. There is too much bureaucracy to obtain funding. There is regional collaboration via the "Assembly of the Regions, however there is tension between this and Brussels- there is funding available but not for education. And there is nothing new in the proposals for SOCRATES II to help the situation."*

Mr Winter a school governor had to approach a local firm to fund a language learning initiative at the school. The initiative was seen as worthy of funding because it linked with one of the countries in which the company had branches. This company also had employees from other European countries living in the area, and their children attended local schools. It was interesting to note that this was industry determining the

worthiness of a European project and controlling its very existence because the objectives matched the needs of the company.

All national politicians, both UK and German were unanimous in the view that education was the domain of the sovereign state. Ms English a British politician said with reference to the policy for introducing the European dimension

*"I doubt whether direction from the centre (Europe) is right. If the centre has a role it should only be information supply. I would question whether a body like the European Commission or Parliament has a right to say – do! It's a bit trite to say SOCRATES is a cornerstone of the policy"*

She felt that the benefit of a programme such as SOCRATES was to take pupils and teachers

*"outside standard thinking and teaching, looking through different eyes It would be particularly beneficial to deprived areas where children and staff would benefit from broadening of horizons, extending of mental maps and lessening of parochial attitudes"*

But Ms English continued that:

*"anything beyond awareness raising and encouragement doesn't have a place. We need to get the basics right and thinking skills. There is already an overload on the curriculum".*

Whilst sharing some of the sentiments that Ms English has, Ms Davies, another national politician but of the opposing party, felt that the power and control of policies lies with national governments and local government. Ms Davies said,

*" Government and LEAs don't pass on information if they don't like it. This is frustrating. It falls back on individuals, the inspired ones to take the ideas forward. We are still scattering the seeds for the international dimension – Ministers have to respond and then it can be debated. – Reports change minds. - But the focus on Literacy and Numeracy standards is crucial."*

Herr Schmitt a German national politician shared the views of the British national politicians and felt that the EU

*"should not influence the national learning programme".*

He was emphatic that education was sovereign. In Germany control of education is through subsidiarity given to the lander who are responsible for the curriculum. Herr Schmitt thought it was the role of the EU to provide help with areas such as encouragement in language learning. However he thought that by taking part in programmes such as COMENIUS / SOCRATES children learn a new vision of working together and of what Europe brings to them.

*“Europe is better when peoples are talking together”*

Mr Lean the headteacher who had formally run a COMENIUS programme in a previous school felt that the power and control lay with the national government by way of the national initiatives which militated more and more against the programmes. Pressures on schools from outside as discussed in Chapter 3 (Figure 2) made the pursuit of projects an extra unmanageable burden.

*“There is no real provision for it in the curriculum given our time constraints. We follow a small project about Germany and France as part of our Geography programme but you could hardly say it was groundbreaking stuff. Funding issues mean its also difficult to manage – narrows what can be done. The Government should put their money where their mouth is if they are really serious about the European Dimension. – It seems like empty rhetoric just to please Brussels. They have the power to make it happen – after all they control everything else we do! Like a number of my colleagues, who are on second Headships, I’m just glad I had the chance to run a SOCRATES / COMENIUS programme in the past which actually was of some value.”*

There appears to be a perception of powerlessness in terms of practitioner’s abilities to initiate programmes containing a European dimension. Interestingly whilst there was a feeling that “Brussels” should not dictate policy in education, there was a feeling that the EU had little power or control over the programme. In fact due to the lack of funding it appeared to be ‘shooting itself in the foot’. The perception of national and local politicians and practitioners was that the power to make programmes happen lies with national and local government. The crusading of individuals who are “inspired”

and the reliance of personalities to persuade and initiate ideas can only achieve so much as other pressures stand in the way. This was a surprise, as the documents and government rhetoric in documents such as the SOCRATES / COMENIUS handbook seem to be supportive of the programme.

*“...For the integrationist strategy of Jean Monet to create institutions which would change the mind-sets of people (Ball 1991) is least likely to work in the area of teaching and learning where historical views of what is worth learning and how it should be done are most powerfully established.  
(McLean, 1995) in (Phillips, ed1995:p29)*

It would appear that at the national level these historical views are firmly established, especially in terms of the ‘return to basics’ approach of recent years. Government action (interpreted policy) as opposed to government rhetoric militates against the intended policy and distorts the intention of the EU. At local level financial constraints and the views of the public in times of restricted budgets governs the policy process and distorts it further to produce the implemented policy.

### **6.3.3 Other issues arising from the interviews**

A number of other issues addressed by the interviewees are drawn together in this section. They include the rapid advances made in information technology and its impact on schools and everyday life. Pressures on schools relating to the externally imposed ethos of competition are also included in the section.

All the interviewees said that they saw a need for an element of international dimension in education. They shared the view that taking part in some kind of international programme promotes a wider perspective on life as demonstrated by their comments in the section about national identity and xenophobia. A need to address Britain’s

isolation is seen as essential because lack of knowledge, awareness and participation leads to disadvantage on the world stage. Ms English said:

*‘It’s an issue for all of us. The world is a smaller place, with ICT a dimension to be aware of- this raises awareness of the rest of the world. There is a need to consider economic stability. The enlargement of the Union to include the Eastern Bloc. We are bolstering up their economy’.*

Mr Lean the headteacher was concerned that the children from the school lived on an estate outside the local town and very rarely left the estate on a regular basis. Of the use of ICT in the SOCRATES programme he said:

*‘The families are inward looking. We need to teach the kids to be outward looking, to see what’s going on in the world. However the use of ICT can compound the isolation as less affluent countries are precluded. It will make us, the rich countries more isolationist, especially as one of the priorities for SOCRATES funding is the use of ICT.’*

Mr Jones argued that ICT and in particular the Internet can have an isolating effect as well as providing contacts with international partners. It was when exchange programmes took place that people were transformed but this is contrary to the experience of Mr Heal, the ex-language teacher and local councillor. Certainly ICT puts less technological countries at a disadvantage in partnership programmes.

The pressures experienced by schools in terms of time, funding, league tables in literacy, numeracy and science and inspection were also identified by the British players. Mr Jones the local authority official acknowledged that the concentration on the core subjects in order to “pass the inspection” and to meet LEA targets was a problem. He felt that these priorities were misplaced but didn’t blame the schools. The government should address the issues, as there is a need to recognise that our economic futures and jobs depend on Europe and we need to take opportunities to include Europe in our educational system. Projects were so very often isolated with little being learnt from

them because they were seen as optional extras. This view was confirmed by Ms King the DFEE official, who said that “COMENIUS activities should not be bolt on activities but integrated into the whole curriculum”.

Backing, for the European dimension was verbally forthcoming from ministers but national priorities were in literacy and numeracy, Ms King reported. Furthermore every proposal of the EU must be notified to parliament and if they are not happy then the actions do not go ahead. (Other countries do not do this). In theory this means that parliament is well informed of SOCRATES initiatives. She continued that parliamentary questions are often asked especially those of a statistical nature. The European Unit of the DFEE is responsible for providing the answers. The “substantial” increase in funding for SOCRATES II has been backed by the British government.

To summarise this section, constraints include lack of funding for initiatives, pressures from other curricular priorities, use of ICT precludes some countries full participation. The apparent support by ministers for the policy illustrates how government rhetoric appears in opposition to the experience at the micro level. This will be pursued in the next chapter.

#### **6.4 Summary and conclusion**

In this Chapter I have discussed thematically, the issues arising from the interviews with key players in the policy to implement a European dimension in education. Most of the issues raised were common to all those interviewed, regardless of their status, political

persuasion or nationality. This was particularly surprising, as I had expected there to be differences in the views of people, in line with their political leanings. It appeared at first that the reason for this could have been the common interest they shared in the EU. The selection of the group I had been able to interview was based on the fact they had agreed to be interviewed, due to that shared interest. Those who had not responded or had refused may not have shared the same level of interest and this was a consideration in the analysis.

There was a mismatch between what was said by national politicians and the actions taken by governments of both Conservative and Labour parties. The power and control to distort EU policy appears to lie with national government in terms of funding issues, lack of organisation or “joined up policy” and pressures of national curriculum content. Local politicians interviewed shared the views of the practitioners interviewed in the need to move forward with the policy but were frustrated in their actions by the policy distortion from national government.

The theme of economic prosperity linked to the educational programme did not figure at all strongly in the interviews. However the theme of racism and xenophobia, (which figures most strongly in the interviews), was the basis for the creation of the European Community.

In the next chapter I shall be analysing a SOCRATES/ COMENIUS project, which was implemented in a Key Stage 2 school. The evidence from this case study will assist in highlighting some of the issues raised in this last section. In Chapter 8 I draw together the evidence from both the documents and the interviews together with the case study

analysis. The analysis will be developed further with reference to the policy refraction process and the unintended outcomes of policy implementation. Areas for further research and recommendations for future work in the area of the European dimension in education will be identified as a conclusion.



## **Chapter 7 - Implementation at the micro level: An illustration of a COMENIUS I project in a junior school.**

### **7.1. The context**

The purpose of this mini case study is to illuminate the data from the interviews and the document analysis and to triangulate the findings. It is my intention to link the case study to the aims of the research identified in Chapter 1

This Chapter will explore implemented policy of the EU through the implementation of a SOCRATES / COMENIUS I project in a junior school in England. The project was implemented under the SOCRATES Phase I regulations which have since been superseded by Phase II. However as has been indicated by key players in the interviews, Phase II has not significantly changed the experiences of schools.

The research aims have guided the way in which the case study has been structured, although the events and the programme itself were initiated independently of the study. The structure of the report has been dictated by the purpose of the case study. Stake (1994) identifies three types of case study. Using Stake's classification this is an instrumental case study. It seeks to "*provide insight into an issue ---It plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else.*" (Ibid: p237). I have treated the report in a similar way to the analysis of the documents and the interviews, and have identified the issues arising from participation, thematically. In this way I am able to link the findings from all three sources. Because of my close involvement with the project the report is written in the first person.

Yin (1994) identifies the use of case study as allowing “...*an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events*” (ibid p14) Yin continues that one application of case study is “..*to describe the real life context in which an intervention has occurred*” (ibid:p25) There is no other research method which allows the context and the intervention to be described in this way. In this project, illumination of the policy intervention in this one school illustrates the impact on one particular context. This enables highlighting of the potential differences between policy rhetoric and implemented policy.

In Chapter 3 I discussed the context within which policy is made, drawing upon Elmore’s (1989) argument that there is an assumption that policy makers control the context within which policy is written, so that implementation is as intended and there is direct control over that implementation. The analysis of the documents and interviews shows that this is not necessarily the case as policy may be wholly or partially subverted as it is mediated by individuals and implemented in a particular context. Ball (1994) developed this issue by pointing out that policy does not only consist of text but of living actions and practices. It is these, which are illuminated by the case study, which follows. It demonstrates how one particular context has affected the outcome of intended policy. The impact of this particular outcome has far reaching effects. The actions and practices remain true for this case but also may affect the future contexts to which the teachers or headteacher move in their future careers. The snowball effect of what has happened here could have a larger impact elsewhere in the future. This is why individual case studies are so important to an understanding of education policy-making. This point is illustrated in the section 7.6 where I make reference to the effect the experiences here had on the context of my next school and the decisions regarding participation in SOCRATES.

There is much criticism of the case study mode of investigation because it does not produce neat scientific cause and effect statistics. Hargreaves (1996) had argued for research to:

*‘i) demonstrates conclusively that if teachers change their practice from x to y there will be a significant and enduring improvement in teaching and learning; and  
ii) has developed an effective method of convincing teachers of the benefits of, and means to, changing from x to y.*  
(Hargreaves 1996:p5)

Michael Bassey (1999) in discussing Hargreaves criticism of educational research introduces the idea of “*fuzzy generalisations*”. Bassey argues that Hargreaves view of research ignores the context and circumstances. He continues to discuss the variables, which are involved in the process of learning. In reply to Hargreaves position Bassey offers a subtle change.

*“..Do y instead of x and your pupils **may** learn more. This is no minor change. It is not just introducing an element of uncertainty. It is not an admission of frailty in the way that the research was conducted. It is a firm reminder that there are many variables which determine whether learning takes place. And it is an invitation to teachers to enter into discourse about it: to read the evidence in support of this statement, to discuss it with anyone else who engages in x, to reflect on the issue, to test out in their own classroom the efficacy of y and to report the outcomes to whatever group will listen. I call these general statements with built-in uncertainty *fuzzy generalizations*.”*  
(Bassey 1999: p52)

It is with this view in mind that I intend to follow Bassey’s model in using the case study as an illuminative tool for the data collected through the documentary analysis and interviews with key players. Whilst the issue of generalising from the data collected to the wider field is problematic, there are important aspects, which may have implications for other European programmes and projects and also for school improvement programmes. In the field of European programmes there must be a dearth of experiences, which would provide further evidence towards the improvement of children’s learning in similar situations. The “*fuzzy generalization reports that something has*

*happened in one place and that it may happen elsewhere*” (Ibid:p52). Continuing this theme Bassey explains that ‘*fuzzy generalizations*’ can become cumulative with researchers in other schools adding to the knowledge by encountering other issues. My own ‘*fuzzy generalisation*’ for this case study is that:

- Participation in an EU education project may have the unintended outcome of raising standards of achievement in pupils, over the whole curriculum.

Obviously this is only one aspect of the outcome of this case study, as I shall discuss later in the chapter.

This case study has arisen out of my own work as a headteacher. As such I inevitably acted as a participant observer in the study as I had also been the project co-ordinator and initiator. I am well aware that this could easily lead to bias in reporting. With this in mind I kept a detailed file of evidence and data, which also served as a check for the auditors from the funding agency, if they wished to confirm details. The file of data contains a variety of documents pertaining to the implementation of the programme.

### **7.1.1 Data for the case study**

The data used in this study consisted of: -

- SOCRATES / COMENIUS Handbook (Phase I).
- Completed application forms for preliminary visit & subsequent programme.
- Letters to & from UK Funding Agency.
- Details of expenditure.
- Contracts between school & Funding Agency.
- Correspondence between school and other participating schools in Germany, France and Italy.

- School Workplans for COMENIUS work.
- The School COMENIUS handbook.
- Meeting Agenda.
- Meeting Reports.
- End of year report to Funding Agency.
- Visit of French Mayor – Details of activities.
- Press releases.
- Information about different school systems, supplied by participating teachers from each country.
- Details of school Presentation to LEA Education Committee.
- Children's end of year / end of unit assessments.

The school at the centre of this study was located in a next door authority from that in which the interviews with some key players were undertaken. Whereas in authority 'A' there is no direct encouragement of schools to partake in international programmes, in authority 'B', where the case study school is situated, schools are now visited by the international department staff to encourage participation.

## **7.2. The COMENIUS Action I Programme**

The COMENIUS Action I Programme is part of the European Community's Action Programme in the field of education "SOCRATES", adopted on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1995 (EC 1995a). SOCRATES Phase I was applicable to the then 15 member states of the EU, to Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and to a number of associated central and eastern European Countries, and Cyprus. COMENIUS Action I deals with school European

education projects (EEP) in the primary phase. Quoting from the European Commission's Directorate General XXII website:

*"COMENIUS constitutes one of the main innovations of the SOCRATES programme as a whole. Building on the possibilities for Community level action in the field of education opened up by the Treaty of Maastricht, it provides support for a number of initiatives designed to enhance the quality of school education and promote the development of a stronger European dimension in the educational process.*

*COMENIUS seeks to enrich and complement the education systems of the participating countries, helping those learning and teaching in schools to enhance their sense of belonging to a broader and outward looking European Community- a community characterised by diverse tradition, culture and regional identity, but rooted nevertheless in a common history of European development."*  
(DG 22 1999)

The aim of the Action I programme is to enhance the European dimension in the school, through shared curriculum activities with partner schools. It is not a 'pen friend' exercise. The teachers from the participating schools at partnership meetings defined the content of the project, although the themes chosen must be chosen from the list given in the application details. Ideally it should be a whole school initiative and it must take place within the curriculum as an integrated part of the "*regular activities of the school*" (ibid.). The areas, which should be used as a basis for a project, are:

- Heritage & culture
- Arts
- Development of literary traditions within and between European countries
- Raising awareness of European citizenship issues
- Local and regional identities
- Science and technology
- Protection of the environment and related issues
- Links between school and the world of work

- Communication and media
- Promotion of equal opportunities between girls and boys

Once the theme of the project has been decided forms must be completed and submitted, first to the funding agency of the co-ordinating school and then by each partner to their own funding agency where a panel adjudicates on whether or not the proposed project meets the aims of the programme. Only when all funding agencies have agreed the project can it go ahead and funds be allocated. It is made clear that the school is expected to allocate a budget from its resources to supplement that which is granted from the funding agency. The maximum amount granted to schools in the period of the project was 2000 Euros per year. Of this only 80% is paid to schools with the remaining 20% being paid at the end of the year.

### **7.3 The European education project in action**

It is within the context of the COMENIUS Action I programme of the EU, described earlier, that this case study is set. At the time I was headteacher at the school.

The school was a junior school with a number on roll of approximately 270 children at the start of the project. However this roll had been falling over a number of years and was predicted to continue to do so due to demographic factors. The school served the local community of private and rented housing, but only a fraction of the children came from the immediate vicinity as the area had an ageing population. The majority of children came from the local housing estate, which had a reputation in the city for vandalism, drug dealing and high incident of crime. Indeed during the time I was head

at the school, CCTV cameras were installed on the estate. Dysfunctional families were often housed on the estate and a number of other families suffered from violence and moved out, their place being taken by more families with problems. One family at the school suffered from their home being fire bombed until they could stand no more and were moved away by the council. Another was moved to a "safe house" until they could testify against one of the local "Mafia families".

The school had a higher than average number of children with special needs, a number of them with "Statements of Special Educational Needs" for behaviour issues. In recognition of the high level of special needs the school received "additional needs funding" of approximately £52,000 per year. When I arrived at the school the staff were disillusioned and worn down by the behaviour of the children. One of the first initiatives I introduced was a system of "Assertive Discipline". This was at the request of the teachers to "do something about the behaviour". The staff, all but two of who had been in the school for a significant number of years, was very open and willing to co-operate in the initiative. Following this, further initiatives addressing the curriculum were introduced. All these were greeted with cooperation. The SOCRATES programme was introduced during my third term at the school. The staff viewed the project as another way of interesting the children and of raising the profile of the school within the LEA. This in my view was the paramount reason for their enthusiasm. The school had taken a great many knocks with the publication of the Key Stage 2 SAT results from the summer term, and from local press coverage of the area.

The project was undertaken as a result of a visit from the authority's "International Officer". He had previously met me at a reception for visiting German educationalists during my second term at the school, after talking informally about my links with



international organisations. As a result he felt I might like to initiate a COMENIUS programme as the first in the LEA. I had not heard of the programme before, neither had I been aware that the EU had a programme or policy within education.

I agreed to take on the implementation of a project after being assured that there would be a minimum of administration work and that there would be plenty of back up help from the LEA. A co-ordinating school in the town twinned with the county town of the authority was already waiting and anxious to make contact, having made contact with the LEA after being identified by the French officials. A preliminary visit by the French school was imminent and took place several weeks after the first meeting with the international officer.

The return visit to the French town to plan the project took place as part of the county town's official international links. Both the International Officer and the Director of Education accompanied my deputy and myself to France. We were received officially in the town hall and I even had to give an "off the cuff" speech in faltering French! It was clear from the fact that the Director of Education and the International Officer had long been expected that a great many negotiations had gone on even before I had agreed to take part. It was also clear that this project was very important to the local authority who were in the process of developing an international policy and had representation in a European office set up by a consortia of local authorities. Very quickly I began to realise that I had had very little idea of that which I was taking on!

The project consisted at this point of two French, two Italian, two German schools and one English school, although later one French school and one German school dropped out. The initial meetings in France with our European partners were conducted in

French. This decision was made as the French Co-ordinator spoke Italian and some English and we spoke very basic French and German. The Italian party had no language other than Italian. The German partners were not in attendance as they had met with the French party the previous week due to other commitments. There were five other French educationalists in attendance at the initial meetings.

The meetings were conducted at great speed. As neither of us was fluent in high level French my deputy and I agreed on a strategy of one of us listening and contributing to the meeting and the other taking the notes. At points during the meeting we requested a pause for us to check that neither of us had missed anything crucial. The three days of meetings were particularly difficult due to the language barrier and we left feeling we were not sure to what we had committed the school. The topic areas to be covered were agreed at this meeting. We were to work on a common project "Pour un Enfant Citoyen de l'Europe". (For a child citizen of Europe). It was to be a multipurpose project, which dealt with every discipline. Through the topics of:

- Daily Life
- Historical and cultural knowledge of the different countries
- Citizenship
- The media
- Art and Sport

We were to prepare a dossier usable by the other partners in their schools. What we had not realised both through our lack of language skills, our inexperience in the programme and the lack of guidance from the funding agency, was that this was far too ambitious a project for the short time of the project and especially for the first year. However we were determined to make a success of the project and when the partners met again at the end of the year everyone was amazed at the amount of ground we had covered with

our children. (Appendix viii) The other countries had decided that they could not cover the work and had produced very little in comparison.

When the contract application arrived at school after our return we needed to fax it to the authority for translation by one of the international department who had a better understanding of French than we did. The contract and accompanying letters totalled fifteen pages. We were fortunate that there was support, although unofficial. This support was not available to further projects.

The project was presented to the staff of the school after the deputy had agreed to be the lead teacher and to initiate any work with her class. I was lucky that the deputy was enthusiastic and together we presented the project as an opportunity to do something interesting, which would enhance the learning experiences of our children. The children had little experience of the area outside the run down and crime-ridden housing estate on which they lived, let alone experience of other countries. The staff were very committed to providing new and interesting experiences for the children. The idea of the participation in COMENIUS was put to the chair of governors who supported my judgement. At the full governing body meeting the school governors who were always supportive of any new measures to enhance the learning experiences fully backed our involvement. It was against this background that the project was initiated.

#### **7.4. Issues arising from participation in the programme**

##### **7.4.1 Time and bureaucracy**

Our completed and translated application forms were sent to the UK funding agency in February of the first year ready for us to start the project in the following September.

However the collection of letters in the data file indicates that the bureaucracy had begun to have an effect. In June the funding agency wrote in response to three phone calls, and apologised saying that there were staffing absences and computer problems which had held up agreement of the project. After further phone calls the letter confirming acceptance of the project was received in early September. Once the agreement had been signed and returned the funding should have been paid within thirty days. However the 80% funding was received late in the autumn term.

Reports of the project were requested in December of the first year together with a request for an overview and estimated costs for the following year. The report obviously was brief due to the fact that the programme had been running for only four months. The funding agency when telephoned replied that all that was needed was a sheet of A4 briefly summarising what had taken place. This was indicative of the time wasting which continued throughout the project. Contact with the funding agency was extremely difficult. Delays ensued and forms were misplaced. A less enthusiastic person would have soon lost patience and terminated the project.

#### **7.4.2 Funding**

The grant for the first year was £1081. The accounts show that the total costs detailed were £2360. A difference of £1279 was borne from the school budget. This may appear to be a small amount but what is not reflected in these figures are the hours spent on the telephone chasing up the funding agency, the time needed for translation, and time for planning. These costs are hidden as the headteacher bore them. However even the amount of £1,279 can have an impact on a small school budget. At the time the school budget allocation was approximately £300,000 per annum. Of this, approximately 85%

was taken up in staffing costs of £250,000 .The remaining £50,000 had to cover maintenance of the very large and elderly building, provide classroom resources and day to day running costs such as fuel, cleaning and grounds maintenance. Very little remained for contingencies.

### **7.4.3 Language**

The issue of language remained a problem throughout the programme. Whilst several members of the teaching staff had basic language skills in French and German, the level of language required for translation of the official documents and for meetings between partners exceeded these skills. During the first year of the programme a member of the LEA international unit provided translation skills for documents, free of charge. However when she retired the issue of translation became a problem. Either the school needed to pay for professional services or they would have to try to persuade someone to give their services free of charge. Several approaches were made and promises made to the school by language students keen to help. However when their services were required, they were either deeply involved with other projects or out of the country. In the end after a lot of chasing around a local independent school provided us with a translation and we were able to proceed with our application. This did not get over the issues of language during the meetings with partners. Eventually at our insistence, at the second meeting in Germany a student of English was provided by the co-ordinating French school. However the meeting continued to be held in French and not in German, although Germany was the host country for this meeting.

On reflection the issue of language should have been addressed from the beginning and a system agreed. It showed how the lack of knowledge of the programme and the

inexperience of the participants had caused ineffective communication. However, the language barrier did not appear to hinder the work the children embarked upon.

#### **7.4.4 Linking the programme to the curriculum**

It is a requirement that the project should be part of the everyday curriculum of the school and should not stand-alone or apart. The very fact that it is a programme of study planned by the partner countries means that by definition it cannot be part of everyday work. It is in fact an additional piece of work, although in this case we were able to link some of it to work that was already part of our school curriculum. However the depth in which it was studied and the amount of work covered in the time was far more than we would normally have done (Appendix viii). The fact that four countries all with very different curricula, some with national or state curricula others with no defined curricula at all, must agree on a joint project, means that the linking to existing work is tenuous and contrived.

#### **7.5. Children's learning**

The children entered into the project enthusiastically. My deputy and myself introduced the project to them at an assembly. We told them about the other schools and presented it as a very special event as no other school in the LEA was involved at this time. We explained that we would be visiting the other schools in France to organise things and that we would come back with lots of information. When we returned from the first visit, we presented another assembly, again emphasising how exciting this was.

The children quickly took the project on board and entered into discussion with me, in the corridor, at lunchtimes in the dining room and when I was in the playground. They wanted to know what we were going to do next and they wanted to learn to speak the languages, although they had no concept of how long it would take to become fluent. We used all this enthusiasm to propel the project forward. At every opportunity it was mentioned. The children took a pride in the fact that they were leading the way in the LEA. This was reinforced when visiting teachers came to see how we had set up our COMENIUS project with a view to starting their own and by the presentation to the education committee at the council chamber, by representatives of each class.

The visit of the French Mayor to the school provided another opportunity to invite the press to write positively about the school. This was an unusual occurrence in an area that usually figured among the crime reports in the local paper. There is no doubt in my mind that the “hyping up” of the project was what engendered the enthusiasm in the children. There was an over subscription for children to join the “European Club” at lunchtimes in which small language activities were run.

Parents began telling teachers that the children were talking about the programme, at home. This was quite an achievement for the school as parents were not normally forward in coming in to talk to teachers and certainly not to provide positive feedback. In staff meetings the teachers reported that children were talking about the activities enthusiastically, however we were not sure that in terms of understanding they were actually gaining a great deal. What appeared to be happening was that a more enthusiastic approach to school was apparent and this had a knock on effect in the reduction of the number of problems between children, with which I had to deal.

There was an increase in standard assessment test (SAT) results overall, in Year 6 over the first two year period of the programme. For example the results in English rose from 25% to 75% attaining level 4 or above in a three year period. It would be difficult if not unreliable to attribute some of these results to the renewed interest in school, without a proper study of school improvement. Since that was not the focus of this study we can only point to factors, which may be operating. School improvement is a complex issue dependent on many factors and whilst it is perfectly possible that the implementation of the COMENIUS project was one of those factors, the result was not necessarily specific to the COMENIUS project. It could well have happened by implementing any project, which was hyped up to increase esteem. This reinforces the argument that there are often unintended outcomes of policy, contingent upon context.

In analysing the samples of children's work for the direct difference and the intended aims of the project, an interesting picture emerged. In the work, which was directly linked to the national curriculum and the school topic cycle, the children often showed an understanding of the knowledge base, commensurate with their developmental stage. For example, the work on weather carried out by Year Three and Four children showed an understanding of systems, in line with the programmes of study of the national curriculum in geography and science at level 2 and 3. Where work was new and was part of a "one off" the enjoyment and enthusiasm was apparent but the understanding was varied and sometimes confused. For example at the end of the second year when asked to write or draw what they remembered about our partners, the youngest children who had experienced the project for only a year all drew foods connected to each of the countries, a few drew national monuments such as the Tower of Pisa, Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe. One boy wrote the word "happy". When this was followed up by



conversations with the children it was apparent that this was representative of their learning with regard to the project.

The children displayed their enthusiasm with comments such as *"It's cool miss"* The children in years Four, Five and Six, who had been working on the project for two years, also majored on the foods they had tasted. The majority of these children could colour on a map of Europe, all three partner countries. In the main the children wrote and talked about the food they had tasted, the buildings and the French songs they had learnt for the visit of the French Mayor. A small number of year 6 children talked and wrote about the Berlin wall and how it had divided families. Another small group identified the work, which had been done on the murals, as fun. Two significant comments were written by two children who were on stage 3 of the special needs code of practice. Each had problems with literacy and one in particular with any kind of sequencing skills. Tara, the first quoted also displayed behaviour problems and was starting to become disaffected.

*"I think it was a good thing and we can look forward to coming to school."*  
(Tara, year 5)

Danny was a year 6 child who received special needs support.

*"We have learnt about the Berlin wall it separated families"*  
*"I reckon it's a good thing so we don't have to have a war"*  
(Danny, year 6)

## **7.6 External pressures**

Whilst this project was being carried out the school had to also contend with external pressures. Although media perceptions of Europe are not always positive and the press in particular often seeks to criticise EU decisions, I was fortunate in being able to

publicise the school's work on the COMENIUS project. The local press was interested to hear of the programme and several small articles of a positive nature for the school were run. However this was after I had established a rapport with the education correspondent.

The changes in the curriculum, the publication of SAT results and Ofsted inspection all contributed to concerns about taking on extra work. The school had been at the bottom of the LEA league tables in the term in which I was appointed. This brought with it pressure from the media as they sought to interview me to explain my "bad results." The perception of the area was poor, with families often the victims of crime on the estate, which went unreported to the police, as they were perceived as powerless or unwilling to change things. Time was frequently taken up in sorting out problems, which were brought into school from outside, such as a fight in the playground between two parents! It was an added pressure to have to battle with the bureaucratic system of the SOCRATES programme. Although "performance management and related pay" had not yet been formalised the prospect of it made me think carefully about taking on the project, especially as I knew I would have to concentrate teaching on the "test subjects" of English, science and mathematics.

My decision to take on the project was not necessarily well thought out as I indicated earlier in this chapter. Certainly I would think carefully about how tenable any new project in another school would be, in terms of these pressures on schools. In fact in my new school I have avoided pursuing a COMENIUS project. I made initial preparations but after finding that very little had changed in terms of support for schools and after again encountering much bureaucracy, I decided to abandon the project. This

demonstrates the continuing gap between the rhetoric and the reality of policy implementation.

## **7.7 Conclusion**

An analysis of the outcome of the implementation of this programme demonstrates that the programme served first and foremost as a school improvement programme. Any achievement of the objectives of the European dimension was secondary. This highlights the issues of how intended policy can be subverted by the policy context, resulting in unexpected outcomes, in this case positive but not necessarily so.

Freeland (1981) highlights the potential for distortion in policy implementation when the policy itself is initiated by a “national government” in a federal setting. This is referred to as “*Policy refraction*”. Elmore (1989) argues that it is assumed that the policy context is controlled by the policy makers so that implementation is as intended. In this case the policy context was not controlled by the policy makers. The policy was subverted unintentionally by the staff and children who used it to promote the school in a positive light in the local press and radio. Even the children began to refer to “what the papers will say”. It was regarded as something special by the media and I doubt if we would have achieved so much support from press and radio if the project had not been an EU project with visitors from abroad. In my opinion this also served to raise the status of the project in the eyes of pupils, staff and parents.

The COMENIUS programme aims as stated earlier in this chapter, appear to have been partially met in this project in respect of the enrichment of the curriculum. This has been demonstrated by the reaction to the project by both children and parents. The

enhancement of a sense of belonging to the European Community appears not to have been met. Certainly the children in the main now have knowledge of the partner countries on a map and a small knowledge of foreign languages. They have positive memories of the project, which possibly will develop at a later time into a desire to learn more but these are very tenuous links to the aims of the programme. It is clear that the issues seen as central to the programme as outlined in the analysis of the policy documents and interviews with key players did not have the same focus in this school based project. The issues of power and control, national identity, racism and xenophobia, knowledge and economics remain. In terms of Bassey's (1999) model of *'fuzzy generalisation'*, the key findings of the case study are that:

- The success of EU projects may be bound up in the ability of schools to take on the programmes, without causing untenable pressures for those managing them. The success may be further affected by outside pressures such as league tables of examination results, the national literacy strategy, national numeracy strategy and performance related pay.
- Where projects are implemented they may contribute to the raising of standards in other apparently unrelated areas.

In this chapter I have examined the outcomes of implementing a COMENIUS project in a junior school. I have discussed the unintended outcomes of the policy implementation and referred to the policy refraction. The issues arising from the interviews and documents at macro level have been highlighted as having a different focus at the micro level. In Chapter 8 I shall explore further the links between all these issues raised and the theoretical and historical background. I will seek to explain the

connections and implications for future programmes within the British education system.

## **Chapter 8 - Conclusion and recommendations**

### **8.1. Introduction and summary: The research aims revisited**

This thesis started out as a study of the policy to introduce a European dimension in education into primary schools. The competing interests of players within the policy for a European dimension in education and the outcomes of their actions have been discussed in the previous chapters. In this chapter they will be related to the empirical questions posed in Chapter 1.

The historical basis for the policy was explored in Chapter 2, where the issues of conflict in Europe and constantly shifting national borders were discussed. The impact of historical thinkers, Rousseau and Herder was considered with reference to political and cultural policy in Europe. The conception of the underlying ideas, which led to the policy for a European dimension in education was traced, from the Treaty of Rome 1957, to the formation and then implementation of the policy in the primary phase of English schooling.

Chapter 3 focused on the theoretical concepts in the literature, underpinning this study. Collectivist and pluralist political cultures were discussed in a consideration of the effect on the content of education curricula. The reason for the location of the study within a constructivist paradigm were presented. This was particularly useful in considering the way in which issues of European identity, knowledge and the purpose of education were constructed by different players and structures at different levels within the policy process. Constructed realities did appear to be altered (Denzin & Lincoln 1994) by players and structures within this policy-making context.

The research focused initially on the macro-level (Phillips & Economou 1999) by examining the policy rhetoric at European (intended policy) and national government level in Chapters 5 and 6. Chapter 7 examined how the policy was implemented at the grass roots level in the context of one particular school. The intended outcomes were analysed in the documentary evidence and the views of key players in the policy process were examined to ascertain how policy makers both national and local could support or subvert those intentions. 'Policy refraction' (Freeland 1981) was identified in the documentary evidence, interviews and in the case study. Policy refraction is defined in this study as the process in which elements within the policy context, structures, persons and concepts focus the policy intentions and then change them so that they are subverted. The concept is rather like white light being refracted into light of different wavelengths by a prism. The resultant implemented policy can look very different from that which was intended. The most surprising outcome of this research was that which was identified in the case study. The European project appeared to have been less than successful in terms of the EU's criteria. However the unintended outcome was that it had acted as a school improvement programme, raising the esteem of the pupils and staff and culminating in a marked rise in SATs results.

## **8.2. Linking and summarising the issues from the interviews, case study and the documents**

Education and in particular the European dimension in education is firmly set on the agenda of the EU as a means of creating a European identity and as a way of combating racist and xenophobic attitudes. Gil (1989) suggests that one needs to first understand the underlying issues of a policy focus before the "*unravelling*" can begin. The issues underlying this policy have been explored in Chapters 2 and 3. I now propose to link

these elements in considering how the data from interviews and documents relate. In this section, the way in which the issues from interviews, case study and documents were linked and the implications this has for implemented policy are considered. The main themes to emerge from the documentary and interview analysis were the following:

- Racism and Xenophobia
- Rhetoric versus the reality of implementation
- Economics and funding issues
- Power and Control

In examining the evidence it becomes apparent that whilst the areas of discussion are largely common ones, the views expressed are often conflicting. Clearly the European dimension in education is high on the agenda of the EU, but the evidence from the interviews and from the case study indicates that in reality, in the UK it does not rate as highly as the EU would desire. There is a lack of “joined up policy” linking the funding agency, government priorities, national curriculum and EU policy.

### **8.2.1 Racism and xenophobia**

The issues of racism and xenophobia raised by the key players resonated closely with the documentation in the desire to eradicate it. In Chapter 6 I identified how the key players saw it as an ongoing problem particularly incited by the media. The need to use education as means of addressing the issue was also a common theme, although the view of the method of achievement varied. The existence of SOCRATES type programmes was largely applauded but some interviewees were concerned about the extent to which the EU should dictate the content of the programme.



The case study evidence revealed that whilst the children had gained a superficial awareness of other cultures and felt linked to their partner schools, there was no real understanding of what it was to be French, Italian or German. In fact stereotypes were likely to be maintained and reinforced through the superficial way in which knowledge of the partner countries was transmitted. Information about famous landmarks and stereotypical foods are not the most effective way of understanding your partner! The one most valuable way that did open a small window on international understanding was the video that each school made of “a day in the life of our school”. It was by actually seeing the other children, even though there was no understanding of the language, that our children started to have some relationship with other cultures. The use of technology, although relatively limited, was possible in this case but in many of the proposed partner countries especially those of southern and eastern Europe, there is no access to these facilities.

### **8.2.2 Rhetoric versus the reality of implementation**

The interview evidence, including that from the DFES and national politicians is that the uptake of the SOCRATES programmes in the UK is relatively poor and that implementation relies on “individuals” and those who are “inspired”. This is very much at odds with the rhetoric from the EU. The EU argued in its report of 14<sup>th</sup> March 1997, following SOCRATES Phase I implementation, that there had been “*a significant increase in European Co-operation, especially in the fields of school education*” (EC 1997). It continues to argue that institutions are giving the European dimension increased priority. The final report, published in February 2001 (EC 2001) details a total of 135 UK schools or institutions having taken part. This is against 1637 for Italy being the

largest group, closely followed by Germany with 1287 and France numbered 884 institutions or schools, which had participated. A European total of 9100 institutions took part in the programme. This is hardly a large number relative to the potential number of schools in Europe.

The UK funding agency for SOCRATES is a branch of the DFES. However there is no 'joined up national policy', which actively encourages schools to take part in programmes and ensure that application and participation, is smooth. The pressures on schools militating against participation originates from government, as discussed in a later section of this chapter. It is an agency of government, which supports the programme but that very government acts in a way that discourages participation!

It was also at local government level that the mismatch between policy and practice was experienced. The reasons appeared to be twofold as evidenced from interviews. Firstly in a time of reduced budgets nationally, European and international initiatives were viewed as expensive 'extras'. And secondly there is still a great deal of racist and xenophobic feeling amongst the general public, fuelled by the popular press, regarding anything to do with the EU. This subverts any positive work that can be done. Councillors in support of European programmes of all types have to work very hard to convince their colleagues, let alone a sceptical general public. However both local authorities do have a "European and International Strategy" which is published in glossy brochures. They are impressive documents but in terms of concrete action, they are limited.

In the field of education it is again the “inspired individuals” who are taking forward action, one being a Senior Education Officer. This reinforces the need to address issues at a young age in the schools, before entrenched views have become established. However without adequate finance from Europe and positive action from the UK government, the rhetoric will continue to be in opposition to the reality of implementation.

The documentary evidence states that if the objectives of the policy are not met then by the principle of subsidiarity the EU can intervene. As discussed in Chapter 5, this means that decisions are taken as close to citizens as possible. If the issue cannot be resolved at this level (usually national level) then the EU can take action. This has not happened in the area of the European dimension in education. In addition to the SOCRATES programme, the national curriculum does contain elements in programmes of study, which relate to the study of other European countries and citizenship, however these elements hardly constitute a programme to meet the objectives stated.

In discussing the UK government position with two of the interviewees, there appears to be support for the idea of the programme but not as a priority. A number of interviewees made it quite clear that control of the curriculum was a national or regional issue not a European one. This together with the deep-seated mistrust of the EU by UK citizens implies that any action by the EU as a result of subsidiarity, in the area of education would be met with significant opposition. All the more reason to bring about the desired results by way of positive persuasion, such as the offer of realistic funding and rewards for schools that take part in programmes.

### 8.2.3 Economics and funding issues

The overwhelming evidence from the interviews is that the funding initiatives are not adequate to allow programmes to take place without additional funds from school budgets. Local authorities appear restricted by accountability to “local rate payers” when it comes to funding anything relating to the EU. The need is seen for concentration on the basics at school level in order to compete in the economic market place. Key players agree that we need to be competitive as a country rather than as part of Europe but this reinforces our isolation. This is further reinforced by the financial incentives or pressures put upon headteachers to achieve ever-higher results in literacy and numeracy in order to attain any salary increments.

Within the first phase of SOCRATES the entire budget represented less than 1% of the Community’s budget (EC 2001) Initially this was EUR 850 million rising to EUR 920 million for operational expenditure after the midway review. The total expenditure for COMENIUS was EUR 140,299,178 of which the Action I programme was EUR 94,999,931. When the final report on the implementation of SOCRATES Phase I (EC 2001) was adopted by the Council, amongst its conclusions were admissions that the programme had proved at times “*too ambitious for its limited budget*” (EC 2001 p5). Other issues raised were the need to increase links between the programmes and an encouragement to analyse the programme’s impact on national education policies together with emphasis on more effective communications, monitoring and evaluation policies. These are crucial issues as economic considerations underpin much of UK education at present. Funding and target related pay is central to government policies. Financial incentives must be sufficient to ensure that schools can take part without

restricted school budgets suffering. The issue of the focus on the national literacy and numeracy strategies in primary education and their link to teachers pay, is an economic issue that can only be addressed through the content of the UK curriculum and through a widening of perspectives on what constitutes progress and quality in education.

#### **8.2.4 Power and control of policy**

From the data presented here it would appear that national government priorities are linked with economic interests and economic strategies are used to attempt to control their implementation. The EU does not appear to choose to address the issue. The reasons for this are not clear. Clearly control is exercised by national government through financial considerations in UK education as discussed in the previous section. The EU now acknowledges that the impact of programmes is dependent on national policies and Community action is supplementary and supportive in its function. (EC 2001:p5) The report argues that the success of Phase II of SOCRATES will depend largely on “*human and financial resources*” (ibid:p5) at both national and European level.

This concept of a more decentralised programme for Phase II highlights the fact that in Phase I, control of the programme was diverted away from the EU to the national level. UK national priorities were able to subvert it largely through economic based actions as described in the previous section. With national governments controlling the programme in the future, will the policy continue to be further subverted or has the EU concluded that competition with national curricula and agendas is futile? Perhaps putting more control of the programme with national governments will give them ‘ownership’ which will in turn result in EU aims being fulfilled? The aim of using

education to create European citizenship cannot be fulfilled by a curriculum knowledge base that maintains national identity. There is a conflict between the requirements for knowledge, which will maintain a national identity, and that which maintains a European identity. The two are incompatible. The discussion in Chapter 3 on the political cultures of collectivism and pluralism made that clear. Within the EU there are many political cultures, with little uniformity. To create citizens of Europe one requires a degree of uniformity and a restructuring of identities. As Coulby (1996) argues, national identity has many inconsistencies that have to be resolved before any consideration of a European identity.

### **8.3. Unintended outcomes of policy and policy refraction**

As Phillips and Economou (1999) argue, vested interests will impact upon the implementation of the policy process by creating resistance. Distortion of policy is also likely to occur along the path of implementation due to cultural differences in interpretation, and due to the feasibility of actual workable situations and the commitment of the players within the system.

In Chapter 3 Elmore's (1989) argument that there is an assumption that policy makers control the policy context so that there is direct control over implementation was discussed. As we have seen in the preceding sections this is not the case for the EU as far as the UK is concerned. The asymmetry of power referred to by Ball (1994) has shifted in favour of the UK government. Freeland (1981) highlights the potential for distortion in policy implementation when the policy itself is initiated by a "national government" in a federal setting. This is referred to as "*Policy refraction*". Although

Freeland refers to the Australian system, parallels can be drawn with the European and UK context. There will be potential for different interpretations at different levels and by all players, as in the interpretation of the concept of a European dimension described by Ryba (1992), cited in Ertl (2003) and discussed in Chapter 1. In some situations it may suit one or other party to mis-interpret their own original policy statement in order to manage an unmanageable situation.

The issue of policy refraction where distortion arises from a layering of policy interests is particularly relevant to this study. Strongly stated objectives from the policy documents appear to have been watered down along the policy chain as competing discourses exercise their power and control. The most dominant influence of this appears to be economics. Whilst the policy to introduce a European dimension in education, has been defined as an 'education policy' in fact it may be more accurate to deem it a policy to achieve other aims by means of education. (SOCRATES has been described by the EU as the cornerstone of its move to bring Europe closer to its citizens.)

There is a need to consider the wider policy context here; Sultana (1996) argues that the EU's policy is powerful and potentially damaging. However the case here would suggest that it has been far from powerful. The context in which it has been implemented is a national one; the influence of national education policy on school curricula is far more powerful than the European influence. Even in terms of the part of the curriculum which is not prescribed, other government initiatives and pressures on schools bring about distortion of the European policy. Ryba (1996) responds to Sultana's argument by

explaining that the role of subsidiarity in fact limits the power of the EU in these matters.

In spite of the fact that the EU now has increased powers in the fields of education as evident by the directives which have been discussed in Chapters 2 & 5; this study would support the view that the EU appears to have a significantly reduced ability to implement its policy without any distortion by national government or by school interests. The argument can be developed further in citing the views of Weiner (1996) & Kliebard (1996) that government curriculum policy reflects public opinion in a much larger domain than just curriculum. This can be linked to the views of the local councillors interviewed who had to work very hard to convince colleagues of the virtue of anything European and the views of national politicians and civil servants who confirmed that there was a huge 'Euro-sceptic' press whose discourse put pressure on government at all levels.

The views of the education practitioners interviewed, together with evidence from the case study, indicates that it is possible that external pressures on schools (as described in Chapters 6 & 7) together with a lack of 'joined up policy' and limited funding will transpire to distort the policy to introduce a European dimension into primary education.

The most positive aspect of the project described in the case study was another unintended outcome of policy implementation. As I have outlined in Chapter 7, the COMENIUS project undertaken by the school acted as a school improvement programme. However I would argue that one could not generalise from this to say that



any school operating a COMENIUS project would find the same. This is because of the particular context in which the programme was implemented. I believe that any programme introduced at that point in time and with the ability to raise the profile positively of the school in the media had the potential to achieve similar results. The improvement came as a result of these factors within the programme:

- Heightened awareness of the school in a positive light, in the local community
- High profile visitors persuaded to visit the school
- Supplemented by press and media attention after building a more positive relationship with reporters
- Whole school focus on the same goal, achieving a 'team ethos'
- Staff and pupils renewed perception of themselves as worthwhile within the community and larger area
- Endorsement from the LEA of the achievement through an invitation to the children to speak about their project to the education committee

The combination of these factors culminated in pupils and staff becoming more committed to the school and to the idea that they could achieve. The result was a considerable rise in SAT results over the following two years. The school had subverted the policy in order to meet its needs within its own context. It was not a conscious move to use the policy in this way but an opportunity, which presented itself as part of the project.

#### **8.4. Strengths of the research**

A frequently levelled criticism of the many studies of the European dimension in education is that they focus on accounts and descriptions rather than analysis of the effect of policies. (Phillips & Economou 1999: p 303) Those, which do centre on analysis, do so as studies of policy effects within a national context as this study does. One of the distinct advantages I had in pursuing this study was that of being a professional practitioner, a serving headteacher. Access to powerful and influential politicians seemed to be relatively easy. I accept that this was in part because those people saw me as a potential 'ear' to sound out political ideas or to seek my views. This was clearly demonstrated by the approach made to me through a third party, as detailed in Chapter 6. Phillips and Economou (1999) cite access to senior officials as an issue in the studies carried out by Economou, on the European dimension in education. My position was clearly a strength in this type of study. Another problem experienced by Economou, which I did not experience, was that of teachers prompting students in their questionnaire replies. My investigation was all part of the whole school project of which I was a member. In this context there was little reason for staff to prompt children and being the headteacher of the school allowed me more influence to ensure that this did not happen.

#### **8.5. Limitations of the research**

The criticisms of small-scale studies such as this is that they are not representative and cannot be replicated. Bassey (1990) discusses the issue of replication and notes that some research findings, which appear to be repeatable, do not relate to different cultural settings with the result that they are not reliable in the generalisations drawn from them. Schools are mini cultures in their own right and it could be argued that any generalisations from school research are not secure.

The inability to run a pilot study could have been a limitation. In an ideal world with unlimited access to powerful people this would have informed the research methods. However the relatively small number of powerful people who agreed to see me combined with the fact that some of the interviewees were obtained through snowball sampling, led to the decision not to use a pilot study.

As Taylor et al (1997) note, there is a politics within the interview situation. In the case of interviews with powerful people this can be magnified and may distort the findings. In order for this not to potentially invalidate data, I needed to be very aware and to consider the situation in the analysis of answers to questions. Another possible limitation was the decision not to tape interviews due to the political position of some of the interviewees. This may have resulted in some loss of data but I was able to minimise the effect by writing up notes in the car, train or taxi as soon after the interview as possible.

It would have been desirable to talk to a larger selection of interviewees but within the constraints of an EdD dissertation this is not possible. A larger number of key players would have enabled me to gather a wider range of opinions on the subject and may have led to additional conclusions being drawn.

## **8.6 Recommendations and implications for future policy and practice**

This section makes recommendations regarding future work in primary education in the field of the European dimension. In making these recommendations, which have arisen from the study, I am aware that the EU has recently made its own in the light of the report on the Phase I of SOCRATES. My recommendations arise out of a study made by a practitioner and not as a result of a consultant's report. The strength of the EU report is that it has considered responses from a large number of contributors. However I would argue that the detail in my findings add to an understanding of the policy in action from a different but no less valuable perspective. It is the details which enable a project to take place or not in a school! The recommendations are for policy both at national level and at European level. The key areas in which these recommendations are made are:

### **8.6.1 Joined up policy**

The findings indicate a lack of linkage between policy documents and practice. Whilst the government purports to support the European dimension in education, the funding agency, which is an agent of the DFES, appears to the observer to lack consultation with its parent body. Furthermore the government induced pressures on schools in terms of the literacy/numeracy focus and the over use of meaningless league tables, conspire against schools' uptake of the programme. Therefore if the government are really committed to the aims of the European dimension in education, it is essential for them to develop a link between policies and actions, which enable schools to easily participate in the programme.

### **8.6.2 Better funding**

Schools need to be able to participate in programmes without financial penalties on a limited school budget. In order to encourage a better uptake of the programme the proportion of European spending on this area of education policy needs to be significantly increased. An increase in funding for school visits has been agreed in Phase II but preparatory visits allow no funds for the host school.

### **8.6.3 Less Bureaucracy**

One of the most time consuming and frustrating areas of participation in European programmes is the lengthy paperwork and needless bureaucracy involved, especially in claiming funding of small amounts. The EU has tried to address this area in Phase II programmes. Early indications are that this is slowly changing. I would still wish to register my recommendation that the administrative systems are simplified.

### **8.6.4 Language support**

A key need in order to facilitate smoother organisation of a project and an increased understanding between partners is better language support for teachers. At present it is very 'hit & miss' and does not add to international enlightenment. Phase II does allow a small amount to be spent on language learning resources such as CD roms.

### **8.6.5 Use of technology**

One of the successes of the programme in the case study was the use of video to produce films for other partners. The emphasis in the programme is for the increased use of ICT in projects. This can cause a problem in countries where the speed of ICT development has not reached that of others. For example the internet could not be used in the case study school as not all partners had an internet line. In rural schools in southern and eastern Europe, the availability of technology is even less. Therefore I would recommend that school groups should be able to apply for funding to develop this aspect of their programme. In SOCRATES II there is more funding available for these aspects but not for ensuring ICT infrastructures are in place.

### **8.6.6 Programme and policy design**

Many of the criticisms of the implementation of the policy for a European dimension in education stem from a lack of understanding of the policy implementation context. The external pressures on schools, which militate against participation, appear never to be considered. It can be argued that any education policy change would benefit from the involvement of practitioners at the level of design and implementation, as discussed in the report of The PACE project (Osborn et al, 2000). In the light of this and my research, I would make a very bold final recommendation to the EU. If there is a real commitment to make Phase II SOCRATES work, even though it is intended that it becomes decentralised, it is desirable to involve practitioners at the grass roots level in the policy design and implementation. It is not enough to merely seek their views through a restricted consultant's report.

## **8.7. Key findings and final conclusions**

The current study set out with these aims:

- To investigate and explore at different levels how and why the European policy to introduce a European dimension into the primary school curriculum has been implemented.
- To contribute to the growing body of knowledge in the policy for a European dimension in education.
- To describe and analyse, through the analysis of documents associated with the policy and with interviews with key players, the underlying reasons for the policy.
- To explore the relationship between the rhetoric of policy at macro level and the practice at micro level, through the gathering of data.
- To use the findings to formulate and identify recommendations for future programmes within the primary phase of education.

In fulfilling these aims, the key findings of this study established that the SOCRATES / COMENIUS Action I programme aimed to bring the EU closer to its citizens through multi-lateral partnerships which focused on specific knowledge. Underlying this knowledge is a set of assumptions, which underpin the policy. They are embedded in the historical context of the EU and address the issues of past and potential future conflict in Europe. The need to prevent hostility between nation states in the future led to economic considerations, as the nations of France and Germany were economically entwined to that end. In order to maintain the status quo the Economic Community was constructed and has since developed into the EU. In order to maintain the Union citizens must have some allegiance to it, and this is one of the espoused aims of the SOCRATES programme. A particular view of knowledge is required to maintain

European identity, which is different from that which will support national identity. It is this knowledge, which the programme promotes.

The school featured in the case study demonstrated that policy refraction could take place along the policy implementation chain. It also illustrated how the programme had unintended consequences in acting as a school improvement programme.

In addition to the recommendations I have made in the area of policy and practice, there is a need to research the actual problems associated with widening the curriculum in the way in which the SOCRATES programme does. The potential benefits that could emanate from well thought out actions may well add to the growing body of information on school improvement as well as fulfilling the aims of the EU.



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## Appendix i The legislative process of the European Union

The details of the legal status of EU documents are explained here. (The legal status of each document has an important bearing on its relative influence.)

*“Community law, adopted by the Council – or by the Parliament and Council in the framework of the co-decision procedure- may take the following forms:-*

- **Regulations:** *these are directly applied without need for national measures to implement them;*
- **Directives:** *bind member states as to the objectives to be achieved while leaving the national authorities the power to chose the form and the means to be used*
- **Decisions:** *these are binding in all aspects upon those to whom they are addressed. A decision may be addressed to any or all Member states, to undertakings or to individuals*
- **Recommendations and Opinions:** *these are not binding”*  
(European Union Website: [europa.eu.int/inst/en/cl.htm](http://europa.eu.int/inst/en/cl.htm) 2001)

In addition to the procedures above, the following non-binding procedures are used:

- **Communications:** The Commission issues these as a statement of its views on a particular subject.
- **Declarations:** The Council may issue declarations as a means of stating their opinion on specific matters.
- **Resolutions:** The Parliament issues resolutions on topics over which it does not exercise power but wishes to exercise influence. These are not legally binding documents but are taken into consideration in the policy and law making process and are the result of the consultation process with other bodies.
- **Green Paper:** As a means of consultation, the Commission issues Green Papers.
- **White Paper:** This follows the Green Paper and details more specifically the issues and actions following consultation.

Very simply, the outline of the legislative process is that it contains four main procedures: consultation, co-operation, co-decision and assent. Proposals emanating from the Commission are consulted upon. This may be done through Green Papers and White papers. This consultation leads to a formal proposal from the Commission to the Council (or Parliament if required). There follows the co-decision or the co-operation. In the co-decision the Council and Parliament receive the document and the Parliament may suggest amendments. These are sent back to the Council who decides whether to accept them or not. If the amendments are rejected or if the Council makes amendments of its own the document is sent back to Parliament for a second reading. If after the second reading the Council still rejects any part a conciliation committee is set up, made up of members of both Parliament and Council in equal numbers. However if accepted a directive or decision is issued. In the co-operation process the Parliament may amend a Commission proposal, however there is no conciliation process and after two readings the decision rests with the Council. Parliament has the power of assent but this does not give it the power to amend.

Laws must be based in one of the treaties and reference must be made to the relevant article of that treaty. Challenge to the Court of Justice on these grounds may be made before the law is ratified

## **Appendix ii    The Early Historical background**

### ***Background***

The sixteenth century rivalry between the King of France and Charles V of Spain, who was also Holy Roman Emperor, resulted in war between the lands of France and the area of what is now part of Germany, and led to an alliance in 1536 between France and Turkey.

1815 Saw Napoleon defeated at the Battle of Waterloo by the armies of Britain, Hanover and Prussia. The Congress of Vienna meeting that year created the German Confederation (Deutscher Bund). Austria assumed the Presidency and together with Prussia they were established as the dominant states over seventy-eight states, principalities and free cities. The war of 1866 between Prussia and Austria, for dominance of the German speaking countries<sup>1</sup>, in which Prussia claimed victory was followed three years later in 1870 when the Prussian politician and leader, Bismark decided to provoke a war with France as his strategy for unifying Germany. This had the desired effect and in 1871 the Treaties of Versailles and Frankfurt were signed and the Second Reich began in Germany. The South German States of Bavaria, Baden and Wurttemberg were admitted to the Federation and William I was proclaimed German Emperor of a re-unified German State. This lasted until 1918 when the end of the First World War and Germany's defeat saw the period of the Weimar Republic established in Germany. The Weimar was based on a democratic constitution. However the war of 1870 had lasting effects and French policy was underpinned by a desire for revenge. This was later to become apparent in the negotiations leading to the war reparations imposed on Germany after the First World War. Even so, France believed that these

were not severe enough. It is interesting to note that the France of the 1780's was a place where most of the inhabitants did not speak French but a variety of languages such as Breton, Occitan and an assortment of Patois. These groups were incorporated into a nation and forced by law to speak only French. (Davies 1997).

The borders within and without Europe have and continue to shift as nations become states and states become nations. The areas covered by modern day France and Germany have been in significant conflict since the sixteenth century. Areas typified by this are Lorraine and Alsace, which, formerly part of France, became part of the unified Germany after the war of 1870. These areas were important to the developing steel industry in Germany, as they were sources of iron ore. The First World War of 1914-18 saw France aiming to recover the territories. This eventually happened in the Treaty of Versailles 1919, although during World War Two they again became part of Germany's Third Reich. The re-establishment of Alsace and Lorraine to France came in the 1945 re-organisation of borders by the Allies.

### ***The influence of political thinkers on the creation of states***

Two influential thinkers from the French and German traditions were Rousseau 1712 – 1778 and Herder 1744 – 1803. Their ideas in the area of education, nationality and the nation state are important to consider. Rousseau's early ideas were influential in the thinking of the rising school of German idealism. He had questioned the value of culture in the way that had been presented in the thinkers of the Enlightenment. Herder had been an avid reader of Rousseau's works. Herder had also broken with the ideas of the Enlightenment, but his ideas of the world took an organic and dynamic view.

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<sup>1</sup> Although referred to as 'German Speaking Countries', there were many other languages spoken. Among them: Danish, Frisian and Polish.

In his book *“Emile”* (1762), Rousseau promoted training the child for the state but in accordance with nature. This signalled a move towards a pedagogical approach in education. His further work on *the Social Contract* (1762) argued that all men are born free and equal. The state was a contract that was entered into by individuals for the protection of their *“Natural rights”* (ibid.) In order to protect these rights, aliens to the state religion would be banished and dissenters punished with death. This turned out to be a doctrine, which was seized upon for use by supporters of the French Revolution.

*“To experience a political culture from within people must share a sense of reciprocity. It is not common interest which itself creates a common culture but the will to work towards common objectives for reasons that are both public and private.”*

*(Rousseau 1762, book I, chapter 6, page 192)*

*“States are highly artificial creations, being made by men, whose common interest is expressed in its laws, forming the basis of association and public opinion. States have no natural existence – drawing their life from people’s collective will and from the laws of its citizens.*

*(Rousseau 1762, book II, chapter IV, page 204)*

Rousseau espoused a patriotic curriculum which covered a range of areas including *“festival and military training”* (Wibourg (2000 p238). An important aspect of it, which relates to the present SOCRATES programme, is that the History and Geography content of the curriculum should only cover the *“territories lying within the national borders”* Wibourg, (2000 p238).

Herder argued that language was central to nationalism and reached further than just communication. In contrast, to Rousseau he saw a nation as a separate common culture embedded in a common language with a separate identity, rather than an entity created by the *“general will”* (Rousseau 1762). It was this, which produced the political identity and the idea of the nation as a sharing of a common tradition, grounded in a common

language. Herder's believed that loss of a common language meant loss of identity. In contrast Rousseau's citizens were united in a contract of political convenience, where the interests of the individual and a desire for a common objective were served by the whole.

So we have two contrasting ideas, on the one hand Rousseau with the "*general will*" (1762) keeping groups together under political leaders, thereby creating a nation and on the other hand Herder with the nation based on historical context and a common language. Thus Herder's concept of education was a means whereby the cultural heritage could be passed through generations. There are parallels between the two sets of ideas in that a common language and culture is the outcome of the nation. Rousseau expels all aliens and Herder's nation has a common language and culture at its roots. There are important parallels with the issues facing united Europe in the consideration of minority languages and cultures.

### Appendix iii - List of Documents analysed

European Commission (2001): *How Europeans See Themselves: Looking Through the Mirror With Public Opinion Surveys*. Brussels: European Commission Press and Communication Service.

European Commission (2000): European Commission, Education & Culture *Gateway to Education, SOCRATES European Community action programme in the field of education,(2000-2006)*

EC (2001) *Final Report From the Commission on the Implementation of the Socrates Programme 1995 – 1999*: (Final Report COM 2001 75 Final)

EC (1999): *Council Resolution 17<sup>th</sup> December 1999 on “Into the new millennium” developing new working procedures for European cooperation in the field of education and training* ( 2000/C 8/04) journal C008, 12/01/2000

European Commission (1998): *Proposal for a European Parliament & Council Decision Establishing the second phase of the Community action programme in the field of education SOCRATES* Commission 1998.

EC (1998): Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the media *Recommendation for second reading On the common position established by the Council with A view to the adoption of a European Parliament & Council Decision establishing the second phase of the Community Action programme in the field of education SOCRATES* (13327/98-C4-0018/99-98/0195COD)

EC (1998a): *Final Decision –23/02/1998 –Training, education: Increase the financial framework of SOCRATES for the period 1995-1999 (amend. Decision 819/95/EC)* (Final Decision 576/98/EC: 23/02/1998)

EC (1998b) *Declaration by the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member states, meeting within the Council of 16<sup>th</sup> December 1997 on respecting diversity and combating racism and xenophobia*. 98/C 1/01 official journal C001, 03/01/1998

EC (1997) *Towards a Europe of Knowledge: Communication from the Commission*. COM (97) 563 final.

EC (1995) *Final Decision – 10/03/1995 –Training, education: Community action programme of exchanges 1995-1999, SOCRATES ref COD/1994/0001*

EC (1995a) *Decision No 819/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14<sup>th</sup> March 1995 establishing the Community action programme 'SOCRATES'*

EC (1993) *Green Paper on the European Dimension in education* , COM(93)457 Final, 29 September 1993 Commission of the European Communities.

EC (1992) *The Maastricht Treaty 1992, (Articles 126 and 127)* URL: <http://europa.eu.int/en/record/mttop.html>

EC (1988) *Resolution of the Council and the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council on the European Dimension in Education, of 24<sup>th</sup> May 1988* (88/C 177/02) Official journal NO. C177, 06/07/1988 P.0005-0007

EC (1976) *Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Education meeting within the Council 9<sup>th</sup> February 1976 comprising an action programme in the field of education* Official journal C038/3, 12/02/1976

EC (1974) *Resolution of the Ministers of Education, meeting within the Council, of 6<sup>th</sup> June 1974 On co-operation in the field of education* Official Journal C98/2 :20/08/1974

EC (1957) *Treaty Establishing the European Community* , Rome, 25 March 1957: London HMSO



## **Appendix iv - Positions of Key Players selected**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
• Ms.English	A Shadow Education. Minister (UK National Politician)
• Mr. Fish	Local Cllr.
• Mr. Heal	Local Cllr
• Herr Rott	German Politician
• Mr Jones	Local - Deputy Director of Education.
• Ms. Davies	A UK M.P(Education Select Committee)
• Ms King	Senior civil servant DFEE (European Division)
• Herr Schmidt	Minister for Education , A Lander in Germany
• Mr Winter	School Governor (With Responsibility for International Education)
• Mr. Lean	Headteacher, involved in COMENIUS project

## **Appendix v Framework for Interview**

- Frame 1 - The interviewee's interest in the international and European field.
- Frame 2 - What role can / does a European Dimension or partnership play in the issues of racism & xenophobia?
- Frame 3 - What issues can you foresee for individual countries if the EU directs any part of the curriculum?  
Any issues you see arising as regards national identity?
- Frame 4 SOCRATES is the cornerstone of the EU policy to bring Europe closer to its citizens – what are the interviewees views?
- Frame 5 - Views on how the policy is implemented at Local Authority level/  
National level.
- Frame 6 Other information

## Appendix vi Extract from the Resolution of the Council of Ministers 1988

*‘Resolution of the Council and the Ministers of Education Meeting Within the Council on the European dimension in education of 24 May 1988 (88/C 177/02)*

*The Council and the Ministers of Education Meeting Within the Council, Referring to their conclusion of 27 September 1985, Reaffirming their resolve to strengthen the European dimension in education in accordance with the ‘solemn declaration on European union’ of Stuttgart (June 1983), the conclusions of the European Council in Fontainebleau (June 1984) and the ‘People’s Europe’ report adopted at the European Council in Milan (June 1985);*

*Considering enhanced treatment of the European dimension in education to be an element contributing to the development of the Community and achievement of the objective of creating a unified internal market by 1992;*

*Noting the resolution of the European Parliament adopted on 20 November 1987;*

*Noting the report of the Education Committee;*

*Stressing the link between improving the presence of the European dimension in education and all the activities undertaken as part of:*

*the action programme on education (9 February 1976),*

*the programme of pilot projects for the improvement of the transition from school to working life,*

*the Erasmus, Comett and Youth for Europe (YES) programmes;*

*Emphasizing the particular importance for understanding among Europeans of the learning of languages of other Member States and of exchanges among young people, Hereby adopt this Resolution:*

*I. Objectives The purpose of this resolution is to strengthen the European dimension in education by launching a series of concerted measures for the period 1988 to 1992;.....”*

*(European Union: official Journal NO. C177, 06/07/1988 P.0005 –0007)*

*The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member states and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member states for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity.*

*(European Union, 1992 Article 126)*

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
<p>Introducing and understanding each other:-</p> <p>*View videos sent by other partners</p> <p>*Class assemblies about Europe / Comenius ##</p> <p>*Materials about the city we live in -written and drawn ##</p> <p>*Launch of school magazine"SJ Euro-mail" ##</p> <p>*Visit by French Mayor - special assembly displays/ press visit</p> <p>*Learning French</p> <p>*Video to made of "How we celebrate Christmas"</p> <p>*TV project for Italian school</p> <p>*Each child to start individual Comenius book this term -"France"</p> <p>*French week</p> <p><i>European display board updated regularly throughout year and children's European club runs throughout the year</i></p> <p>## Linked to national curriculum</p>	<p>* The Conservation Area in words and pictures (to send to partners)</p> <p><b>*Fairy stories, myths and legends</b> Beowulf - a visit from theatre group follow up art and drama work filmed and photographed ##</p> <p>Beauty &amp; the Beast, Hansel &amp; Gretle, Pinnochio, Three Little Pigs.- Artist in Residence to produce murals with children. Comparison of different versions of the stories</p> <p>*Weather - Project jointly with Germany weather reports ## comparison of climates ## data handling ## poetry ## art work ##</p> <p>* Presentation to the Education Committee-group of 20 children to present the Comenius Project work so far.</p>	<p>* German week in school</p> <p>*Data collection and interpretation re partner countries</p> <p>*Leisure time in our city</p> <p>*Tourism</p> <p>*Comics and magazines</p> <p>*Television and films</p> <p>*SJ Euro-mail</p> <p>*Video diary - Day in the life of our school</p> <p>*Italian Week</p>



## Appendix ix - Map of Europe - Political



### Key

- European Union EU Member States (as at 03/03)
- Applicant Countries (as at 03/03)
- Non- member Countries

*Map courtesy of the EU on-line map service at the Europa website. 03/2003*

